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LIFE AND TIMES OF WASHINGTON

SCHROEDER-LOSSING

REVISED, ENLARGED, AND ENRICHED: AND WITH A SPECIAL INTRODUCTION BY EDWARD C. TOWNE, B. A.

VOLUME II

ALBANY ∴ ∴ ∴ ∴ ∴ NEW YORK
M. M. BELCHER PUBLISHING CO.
1903

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PART III.

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CHAPTER III.

CAUSES OF THE REVOLUTION.

1763–1766.

AT the time when Washington was interesting himself in the project for draining the Great Dismal swamp, a new Indian war broke out on the western border. This took place just after the news of the definitive treaty of Fontainebleau between France and England had been signed, and the colonists of North America were flattering themselves with the prospect of a long course of peace and tranquillity. In order to understand the origin of this new Indian war, it is necessary to go back to a review of their affairs for the previous two years.

In a conference between several American Governors and the Six Nations soon after the peace of 1761, a warm dispute arose concerning certain lands which the Indians asserted had been seized by some English settlers under a fraudulent conveyance. Population too augmented so rapidly during peace that the colonists overran their prescribed limits, and as a chain of forts had been constructed around the most important hunting lands of the Indians, they perceived that the English by fate or by design were about to extirpate them and take possession of their territory. The Shawanese, Delawares, the tribes along the Ohio, this side of the Mississippi, and about Detroit, concerted a plan in 1763 to attack at one and the same time all the English posts and settlements in their neighborhood. Harvest was the time agreed upon, and so effectually was the

design concealed that the first notice was in the yells of the Indians. The settlers were surprised at work in the field, their crops devastated and their houses burnt. The Indians made themselves masters of Forts Le Bœuf, Venango, Presqu' Ile, and Michilimackinack, and attempted to reduce Pitt, Detroit, and Niagara.

General Amherst immediately detached strong reinforcements to the three latter forts. The one destined for Detroit was put under the command of Captain Dalyell, who was so little acquainted with Indians as to imagine that he might take them by surprise and at once relieve the fort from further annoyance. About 2 o'clock in the morning he started from the fort with 270 men, and while he supposed he was advancing entirely unobserved received a fire in his front and before his men had recovered the shock, another in the rear and immediately after one on each flank. He fell and the command devolved upon Captain Grant who extricated himself by a resolute charge, and was enabled to make his way back to the fort. The Indians knew that the garrison was now strong and well supplied, and as they could not endure a protracted siege the enterprise was abandoned.

The reinforcement for Fort Pitt was intrusted to Colonel Bouquet who started about the end of July with a large quantity of provisions and military stores. Like Captain Dalyell he fancied it possible to elude the observation of the enemy, and the more effectually to secure his purpose he resolved to pass the defile of Turtle creek in the night. On the 5th of August (1763), his men had marched seventeen miles over a rough and mountainous country, and were just preparing to rest and refresh themselves when a sudden yell and fire in front announced the presence of the savages and threw the army again upon their legs. A vigorous charge drove back the Indians but it was only to

lead the troops into an ambuscade, and whatever might be the glory of the conquest they were satisfied to regain their former position. Similar charges were made in every direction but the troops seemed only to beat the air or fight an invisible enemy. The Indians gave way in one place merely to fall on in another, and what would have been defeat to others was victory to them. The action was continued from 1 in the afternoon till evening, and though the troops were successful in every attack they gained nothing in the end.

The men slept little during the night, and on the first dawn of the morning the Indians aroused them with the whoop of battle and the roar of their guns. The taste of blood seemed to have given them new ferocity, and even the English themselves, exhausted as they were, recommenced the action with additional vigor — some stimulated by the hopes of revenge and others by a spirit of desperation. The Indians were regularly driven at the point of the bayonet and as regularly turned upon their pursuers as soon as the chase was over. These efforts were repeated till the men became hopeless, they saw their strength thrown away, and their courage exerted in vain, and they stood remembering the fate of Braddock and perhaps trembling at their own — when Colonel Bouquet, availing himself of his dear-bought experience, resolved to fight the Indians in their own way.

The army was encamped in a circle. Two companies who had been posted without the circumference were ordered to retire within, the two ends of the broken circle to close up in their rear, and after making a show of resistance to give way and retreat. The two first companies at the same time were joined by one company of grenadiers and another of light infantry. The thin ranks gave ground according to orders, the Indians followed with headlong im-

petuosity and supposing themselves masters of the field began what they meant for a slaughter rather than an action. Two of the companies already mentioned made a sudden turn upon their flank, while the two remaining attacked them in front. For a moment they were not undeceived and returned the fire with activity and resolution. But a short time served to convince them of their mistake; they betook themselves to their swiftness of foot and the four companies pursued them so closely that they never looked behind until they got beyond the probability of annoyance. But this conquest was in truth a defeat. The great object of the expedition was to supply Fort Pitt with stores, and so many of the pack-horses were killed in these several engagements that Colonel Bouquet was obliged to destroy the greatest part of the provisions. The army advanced about two miles, pitched their tents, and imagined that they might take some rest. Scarcely had they finished their preparations when the Indians again made their appearance. They seemed not to be yet certain that they were the weakest, but a few discharges completed their conviction, and for the four remaining days they suffered the troops to march unmolested.

Having succeeded so ill against Forts Detroit and Pitt, the Indians now concentrated their forces for an attack upon Niagara. Their object was to isolate the fort and intercept its reinforcements and supplies. On the 14th of September, 1764, they annihilated a convoy which was marching to its relief, and not long after made an unsuccessful attack in canoes upon a schooner which was carrying provisions to Detroit. All the nothern Colonies were called upon to contribute their quotas of men for the prosecution of the war, and among the rest Connecticut raised a battalion and put it under the command of Col. Israel Putnam. Strengthened by these reinforcements, Colonels Bouquet and Bradstreet

so harassed the Indians during the spring and summer of 1765, that in September they were willing to bury the hatchet and conclude a peace.

Washington holding no military command at the time took no active part in this war, although the Indians who were concerned in it were the same who had been engaged either as his allies or enemies in the former wars in which he had served, and the theater of their operations was not unfamiliar to him.

While this war was still in progress, the course of public affairs was gradually tending toward that far more important contest in which Washington was destined to act so conspicuous a part — the War of the Revolution. Mr. Sparks, than whom there can be no more competent authority, assures us that notwithstanding the contrary assertions of certain British writers who question his patriotism at the beginning of the dispute, "no man in America took a more early, open, and decided part in asserting and defending the rights of the Colonies and opposing the pretensions set up by the British Government."

As a member of the Virginia House of Burgesses, he was placed in a position where his political sentiments could not but be publicly known, and the record of the proceedings shows that he acted with Henry, Randolph, Lee, Wythe, Pendleton, and other patriotic opponents of the oppressive measures of the British Parliament. It is necessary, for a proper understanding of the origin of these measures, to examine the history and character of the connection between the Colonies and the mother country for a considerable period.

From the first settlement of the English Colonies in America till the close of the year 1755, the conduct of Great Britain toward them was that of a kind parent toward dutiful children. As her main object was commerce, with-

out charging herself with the care of their internal police or seeking a revenue from them, she contented herself with a monopoly of their trade. They shared in the privileges of native subjects, and felt but slight inconvenience from the regulations imposed by the mother country.

Until 1759, the only acts of Parliament which were considered grievances were such as a prohibition of cutting down pitch and tar trees not within a fence or inclosure, and certain restrictions which acted against colonial manufactures, particularly those of iron and woollen.

Though these restrictions were a species of affront, by their implying that the colonists had not sense enough to discover their own interest, and though they seemed calculated to crush their native talents and to keep them in a constant state of inferiority without any hope of arriving at those advantages, to which by the native riches of their country they were prompted to aspire; yet, if no other grievances had been superadded to what existed in 1763, these would have been soon forgotten for their pressure was neither great nor universal. The good resulting to the Colonies from their connection with Great Britain infinitely outweighed the evil.

Till the year 1764, the colonial regulations seemed to have no other object but the common good of the whole empire. Exceptions to the contrary were few and had no appearance of system. When the approach of the Colonies to manhood made them more capable of resisting imposition, Great Britain changed the ancient system under which her Colonies had long flourished. When policy would rather have dictated a relaxation of authority, she rose in her demands and multiplied her restraints.

For some time before and after the termination of the War of 1755, a considerable trade had been carried on between the British and Spanish Colonies in the manufactures

of Great Britain, imported by the former and sold by the latter, by which the British Colonies acquired gold and silver and were enabled to make remittances to the mother country. This trade, though it did not clash with the spirit of the British navigation laws, was forbidden by their letter.

On account of the advantage which all parties and particularly Great Britain reaped from this trade, it had long been winked at by persons in power, but at the period before mentioned some new regulations were adopted by which it was almost destroyed. This was effected by armed cutters whose commanders were enjoined to take the usual custom-house oaths and to act in the capacity of revenue officers.

The officers of the customs began to enforce with strictness all the acts of Parliament regulating the trade of the Colonies, several of which had been suspended or had become obsolete. Governor Bernard, of Massachusetts, who was always a supporter of the royal prerogative, appears to have entered fully into these views and to have indicated by his appointment of confidential advisers, that his object would be to extend the power of the Government to any limits which the ministry might require. The first demonstration of the new course intended to be pursued, was the arrival of an order in council to carry into effect the acts of trade, and to apply to the supreme judicature of the province for writs of assistance to be granted to the officers of the customs. According to the ordinary course of law, no searches or seizures could be made without a special warrant issued upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, particularly designating the place to be searched and the goods to be seized. But the writ of assistance was to command all sheriffs and other civil officers to assist the person to whom it was granted, in

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breaking open and searching every place where he might suspect any prohibited or uncustomed goods to be concealed. It was a sort of commission, during pleasure, to ransack the dwellings of the citizens, for it was never to be returned, nor any account of the proceedings under it rendered to the court whence it issued. Such a weapon of oppression in the hands of the inferior officers of the customs might well alarm even innocence and confound the violators of the law.

The mercantile part of the community united in opposing the petition, and was in a state of great anxiety as to the result of the question. The officers of the customs called upon Mr. Otis* for his official assistance as advocate-general to argue their cause, but as he believed these writs to be illegal and tyrannical, he resigned the situation, though very lucrative, and if filled by a compliant spirit leading to

* James Otis, a distinguished patriot and statesman, was the son of the Honorable James Otis, of Barnstable, Massachusetts, and was graduated at Harvard College in 1743. After pursuing the study of the law under Mr. Gridley, the first lawyer and civilian of his time, at the age of twenty-one he began the practice at Plymouth. In 1761 he distinguished himself by pleading against the writs of assistance, which the officers of the customs had applied for to the judges of the Supreme Court. His antagonist was Mr. Gridley. He was in this or the following year chosen a member of the Legislature of Massachusetts, in which body the powers of his eloquence, the keenness of his wit, the force of his arguments, and the resources of his intellect, gave him a most commanding influence. When the arbitrary claims of Great Britain were advanced he warmly engaged in defense of the Colonies, and was the first champion of American freedom who had the courage to affix his name to a production that stood forth against the pretensions of the parent State. He was a member of the Congress which was held at New York in 1765, in which year his "Rights of the Colonies Vindicated," a pamphlet, occasioned by the Stamp Act, and which was considered as a masterpiece both of good writing and of argument, was pub-

the highest favors of government. The merchants of Salem and Boston applied to Otis and Thacher, who engaged to make their defense. The trial took place in the council-chamber of the old Town House in Boston (1761). The judges were five in number including Lieutenant-Governor Hutchinson, who presided as chief justice, and the room was filled with all the officers of government and the principal citizens, to hear the arguments in a cause that inspired the deepest solicitude. The case was opened by Mr. Gridley, who argued it with much learning, ingenuity, and dignity, urging every point and authority that could be found after the most diligent search, in favor of the custom house petition, making all his reasoning depend on this consideration — "if the Parliament of Great Britain is the sovereign legislator of the British empire." He was followed by Mr. Thacher on the opposite side, whose reasoning was ingenious and able, delivered in a tone of great mildness and moderation. "But," in the language of President Adams, "Otis was a flame of fire, with a promptitude of classical allusion, a depth of research, a rapid summary of historical events and dates, a profusion of legal authorities, a prophetic glance into futurity, and a rapid torrent of impetuous eloquence, he hurried away all before him. American independence was then and there born. The seeds of patriots and heroes, to defend the *Non sine Diis animosus infans*, to defend the vigorous youth, were then and there sown. Every man of an immense crowded

lished in London. For the boldness of his opinions he was threatened with arrest; yet he continued to support the rights of his fellow citizens. He resigned the office of judge-advocate in 1767, and renounced all employment under an administration which had encroached upon the liberties of his country. His warm passions sometimes betrayed him into unguarded epithets that gave his enemies an advantage, without benefit to the cause which lay nearest his heart.

audience appeared to me to go away as I did, ready to take arms against writs of assistance. Then and there was the first scene of the first act of opposition to the arbitrary claims of Great Britain. Then and there the child Independence was born. In fifteen years, *i. e.* in 1776, he grew up to manhood and declared himself free."

The restrictions on the trade of the colonists and the unusual mode of enforcing them, which Otis so eloquently opposed, awakened a spirit of resistance that never was allayed. Nor should this be a matter of surprise.

So sudden a stoppage of an accustomed and beneficial commerce by an unusually rigid execution of old laws was a serious blow to the northern Colonies. It was their misfortune that though they stood in need of vast quantities of British manufactures, their country produced very little that afforded a direct remittance to pay for them. They were therefore under a necessity of seeking elsewhere a market for their produce, and by a circuitous route, acquiring the means of supporting their credit with the mother country. This they found by trading with the Spanish and French Colonies in their neighborhood. From them they acquired gold, silver, and valuable commodities, the ultimate profits of which centered in Great Britain.

This intercourse gave life to business of every denomination, and established a reciprocal circulation of money and merchandise to the benefit of all parties concerned. Why a trade essential to the Colonies, and which so far from being detrimental, was indirectly advantageous to Great Britain should be so narrowly watched and so severely restrained, could not be accounted for by the Americans without supposing that the rulers of Great Britain were jealous of their adventurous commercial spirit, and of their increasing number of seamen.

Their actual sufferings were great but their apprehen-

GENERAL ISRAEL PUTNAM.

sions were greater. Instead of viewing the parent state as formerly in the light of an affectionate mother, they conceived her as beginning to be influenced by the narrow views of an illiberal step-dame.

After the 29th of September, 1764, the trade between the British and the French and Spanish Colonies was in some degree legalized, but under circumstances that brought no relief to the colonists, for it was loaded with such enormous duties as were equivalent to a prohibition.

While Great Britain attended to her first system of colonization, her American settlements though exposed in unknown climates and unexplored wildernesses grew and flourished, and in the same proportion the trade and riches of the mother country increased. Some estimate may be made of this increase from the following statement: the whole export trade of England, including that to the Colonies in the year 1704, amounted to £6,509,000 sterling; but so immensely had the Colonies increased that the exports to them alone in the year 1772, amounted to £6,022,132 and they were yearly increasing.

In the short space of sixty-eight years the Colonies added nearly as much to the export commerce of Great Britain, as she had grown to by a progressive increase of improvement in 1700 years. And this increase of colonial trade was not at the expense of the general trade of the kingdom, for that increased at the same time from £6,000,000 to £16,000,000.

In this auspicious period, the mother country contented herself with exercising her supremacy in superintending the general concerns of the Colonies, and in harmonizing the commercial interest of the whole empire. To this the most of them bowed down with such filial submission as demonstrated that they, though not subjected to parliamentary

taxes, could be kept in subordination and in perfect subserviency to the grand views of colonization.

Immediately after the peace of Paris, 1763, a new scene was opened. The national debt of Great Britain then amounted to £148,000,000, for which an interest of nearly £5,000,000 was annually paid. While the British minister was digesting plans for diminishing this amazing load of debt, he conceived the idea of raising a substantial revenue in the British Colonies from taxes laid by the Parliament of the parent State. On the one hand it was urged that the late war originated on account of the Colonies — that it was reasonable, more especially as it had terminated in a manner so favorable to their interest that they should contribute to the defraying of the expenses it had occasioned.

Thus far both parties were agreed, but Great Britain contended that her Parliament, as the supreme power, was constitutionally vested with an authority to lay them on every part of the empire. This doctrine, plausible in itself, and conformable to the letter of the British Constitution, when the whole dominions were represented in one assembly, was reprobated in the Colonies as contrary to the spirit of the same government, when the empire became so far extended as to have many distinct representative assemblies. The colonists believed that the chief excellence of the British Constitution consisted in the right of the subjects to grant or withhold taxes, and in their having a share in enacting the laws by which they were to be bound.

The English Colonies were originally established, not for the sake of revenue, but on the principles of a commercial monopoly. While England pursued trade and forgot revenue her commerce increased at least fourfold. The Colonies took off the manufactures of Great Britain and paid for them with provisions or raw materials. They

united their arms in war, their commerce and their councils in peace, without nicely investigating the terms on which the connection of the two countries depended.

A perfect calm in the political world is not long to be expected. The reciprocal happiness, both of Great Britain and of the Colonies, was too great to be of long duration. The calamities of the war of 1755 had scarcely ended when the germ of another war was planted, which soon grew up and produced deadly fruit.

At that time sundry resolutions passed the British Parliament relative to the imposition of a stamp duty in America which gave general alarm. By them the right, the equity, the policy, and even the necessity of taxing the Colonies was formally avowed. These resolutions, being considered as the preface of a system of American revenue, were deemed an introduction to evils of much greater magnitude. They opened a prospect of oppression, boundless in extent and endless in duration. They were nevertheless not immediately followed by any legislative act. Time and an invitation were given to the Americans to suggest any other mode of taxation that might be equivalent in its produce to the stamp act, but they objected not only to the mode but the principle, and several of their assemblies, though in vain, petitioned against it.

An American revenue was in England a very popular measure. The cry in favor of it was so strong as to confound and silence the voice of petitions to the contrary. The equity of compelling the Americans to contribute to the common expenses of the empire satisfied many, who, without inquiring into the policy or justice of taxing their unrepresented fellow subjects, readily assented to the measures adopted by the Parliament for this purpose.

The prospect of easing their own burdens at the expense of the colonists dazzled the eyes of gentlemen of

landed interest, so as to keep out of their view the probable consequences of the innovation. The omnipotence of Parliament was so familiar a phrase on both sides of the Atlantic that few in America, and still fewer in Great Britain, were impressed in the first instance with any idea of the illegality of taxing the colonists.

The illumination on that subject was gradual. The resolutions in favor of an American stamp act, which passed in March, 1764, met with no opposition. In the course of the year which intervened between these resolutions and the passing of a law grounded upon them, the subject was better understood, and constitutional objections against the measure were urged by several, both in Great Britain and America. This astonished and chagrined the British ministry, but as the principle of taxing America had been for some time determined upon, they were unwilling to give it up.

Impelled by partiality for a long-cherished idea, Mr. Grenville brought into the House of Commons his long-expected bill for imposing a stamp duty on America. By this act, after passing through the usual forms, it was enacted that the instruments of writing which are in daily use among a commercial people should be null and void unless they were executed on stamp paper or parchment, charged with a duty imposed by the British Parliament.

During the debate on the bill the supporters of it insisted much on the Colonies being virtually represented in the same manner as Leeds, Halifax, and some other towns were. A recurrence to that plea was a virtual acknowledgment that there ought not to be taxation without representation. It was replied that the connection between the electors and non-electors of Parliament in Great Britain were so interwoven, from both being equally liable to pay the same common tax as to give some security of property to the latter,

but with respect to taxes laid by the British Parliament and paid by the Americans, the situation of the parties was reversed. Instead of both parties bearing a proportionable share of the same common burden, what was laid on the one was exactly so much taken off the other.

The bill met with no opposition in the House of Lords, and on the 22d of March (1765), it received the royal assent. The night after it passed, Dr. Franklin wrote to Mr. Charles Thomson: "The sun of liberty is set, you must light up the candles of industry and economy." Mr. Thomson answered: "He was apprehensive that other lights would be the consequence," and foretold the opposition that shortly took place.

On its being suggested from authority that the stamp officers would not be sent from Great Britain, but selected from among the Americans, the colonial agents were desired to point out proper persons for the purpose. They generally nominated their friends, which affords a presumptive proof that they supposed the act would be carried into effect. In this opinion they were far from being singular.

That the colonists would be ultimately obliged to submit to the stamp act was at first commonly believed both in England and America. The framers of it in particular flattered themselves that the confusion which would arise upon the disuse of writings and the insecurity of property, which result from using any other than those required by law, would compel the Colonies, however reluctant, to use the stamp paper and consequently to pay the taxes imposed thereon. They therefore boasted that it was a law that would execute itself.

By the terms of the stamp act it was not to take effect till the first day of November (1764), a period of more than seven months after its passing. This gave the colonists an opportunity for leisurely canvassing the new subject and examining it fully on every side.

In the first part of this interval, struck with astonishment, they lay in silent consternation, and could not determine what course to pursue. By degrees they recovered their self-possession.

The first strong and decisive opposition to the stamp act took place in Virginia. On the 20th of May (1765), the subject was brought forward in the House of Burgesses by the introduction of the celebrated resolutions of Patrick Henry, claiming for the local government of that Colony the exclusive right of taxing its inhabitants. These resolutions were in fact an expression of the public sentiment throughout all the Colonies, and their publication instantly set the country in a flame.

[Henry's resolutions were as follows:

"1. *Resolved*, That the first adventurers and settlers of this, his majesty's colony and dominion, brought with them and transmitted to their posterity, and all other his majesty's subjects, since inhabiting in this, his majesty's said colony, all the privileges, franchises, and immunities that have at any time been held, enjoyed, and possessed, by the people of Great Britain.

"2. *Resolved*, That by two royal charters, granted by king James the First, the colonists aforesaid are declared entitled to all the privileges, liberties, and immunities of denizens and natural born subjects, to all intents and purposes, as if they had been abiding and born within the realm of England.

"3. *Resolved*, That the taxation of the people by themselves or by persons chosen by themselves to represent them, who can only know what taxes the people are able to bear, and the easiest mode of raising them, and are equally affected by such taxes themselves, is the distinguishing characteristic of British freedom, and without which the ancient constitution cannot subsist.

"4. *Resolved*, That his majesty's liege people of this most ancient colony have uninterruptedly enjoyed the right of being thus governed by their own assembly in the article of their taxes and internal police, and that the same hath never been forfeited, or any other way given up, but hath been constantly recognized by the kings and people of Great Britain.

"5. *Resolved*, therefore, That the general assembly of this colony have the only and sole exclusive right and power to lay taxes and impositions upon the inhabitants of this colony; and that every attempt to vest such power in any person or persons whatsoever, other than the general assembly aforesaid, has a manifest tendency to destroy British as well as American freedom."]

As a member of the House of Burgesses it was Washington's good fortune to witness the splendid and momentous debate which followed the moving of these resolutions. His position as a wealthy planter would naturally have led him to take part with the aristocratic and loyal party who opposed them. But his habits and character were such as to produce an earnest sympathy with the people. Like Henry himself, he was a born patriot, and like him he was what is called a self-made man. His opinions on the stamp act are expressed without reserve in his correspondence, and though no record of his vote on this occasion is preserved, there can be no doubt that it was cast on the popular side. We may therefore easily imagine what his feelings must have been in witnessing the debate which is thus described by Mr. Wirt:*

"By these resolutions," says Mr. Jefferson, "and his manner of supporting them, Mr. Henry took the lead out of the hands of those who had theretofore guided the pro-

* Life of Patrick Henry.

ceedings of the House; that is to say, of Pendleton, Wythe, Bland, and Randolph." It was indeed the measure which raised him to the zenith of his glory. He had never before had a subject which entirely matched his genius, and was capable of drawing out all the powers of his mind. It was remarked of him, throughout his life that his talents never failed to rise with the occasion and in proportion with the resistance which he had to encounter. The nicety of the vote on his last resolution proves that this was not a time to hold in reserve any part of his forces. It was indeed an Alpine passage under circumstances even more unpropitious than those of Hannibal, for he had not only to fight hand to hand the powerful party who were already in possession of the heights, but at the same instant to cheer and animate the timid band of followers that were trembling, fainting, and drawing back below him. It was an occasion that called forth all his strength, and he did put it forth in such a manner as man never did before. The cords of argument with which his adversaries frequently flattered themselves they had bound him fast, became packthreads in his hands. He burst them with as much ease as the unshorn Samson did the bands of the Philistines. He seized the pillars of the temple, shook them terribly, and seemed to threaten his opponents with ruin. It was an incessant storm of lightning and thunder which struck them aghast. The faint-hearted gathered courage from his countenance, and cowards became heroes while they gazed upon his exploits.

It was in the midst of this magnificent debate, while he was descanting on the tyranny of the obnoxious act, that he exclaimed in a voice of thunder and with the look of a god, "Cæsar had his Brutus — Charles I his Cromwell — and George III" — ("Treason!" cried the

Speaker — "treason! treason!" echoed from every part of the House.— It was one of those trying moments which is decisive of character.— Henry faltered not an instant, but rising to a loftier attitude and fixing on the Speaker an eye of the most determined fire, he finished his sentence with the firmest emphasis) — "*may profit by their example!* If *this* be treason, make the most of it."

[It is of importance to understand the relation of Patrick Henry at this time to the situation in Virginia. Many of the gentlemen of the Colony had become involved in a state of indebtedness which later ended in a general crash of their fortunes. The Speaker of the Assembly, Mr. John Robinson, who had long been at the head of the citizenship of Virginia, was also the Colony Treasurer. A man of the highest character, of great estate, wide acquaintance, and liberal disposition, he had been drawn in to lend on his own account great sums of money to planters, especially those who were members of the Assembly. He used freely for this purpose the public money, confiding for its replacement in his own means together with the securities he had taken on these loans. The time had come however when it became manifest to him and to his friends whom he had accommodated, that his deficit had become far too large to be dealt with in the ordinary way, and that a painful disclosure of the use that had been made of public money was inevitable. To meet the situation in a way to escape this, Mr. Robinson with his involved friends proposed to carry through the Assembly a plan for a public loan office from which moneys could be lent on public account and on good landed security to individuals. An account of the proposed plan was published on the 17th of May, 1765, and between that date and the 30th, the date of Mr. Henry's resolutions on the stamp act, the motion for a loan office was

brought forward in the House of Burgesses. It was urged in support of the plan that in consequence of unfortunate circumstances in the Colony, men of substantial property had contracted debts, which must ruin them and their families unless time could be given them to sufficiently recover their fortunes and meet their obligations. Mr. Henry was not of the aristocratic clique, he was in fact from the common people by an election which had just introduced him into the Assembly, and his appearance is said by Wirt to have been that of "an obscure and unpolished rustic." Nevertheless new as he was to the position, with the impulsive courage and energy characteristic of his genius, and in fact ignorant of the situation of Robinson and his friends, Henry vigorously attacked the loan office scheme on sufficiently just general grounds, and for a climax of the eloquence which speedily made him famous, electrified his hearers by exclaiming: "What, sir! Is it proposed then to reclaim the spendthrift from his dissipation and extravagance by filling his pockets with money?" The pith and point of Henry's attack on the loan office proposition, his exposition of the spirit of favoritism on which the proposition was founded, and the abuses to which it would lead, so far won the suffrages of the Assembly as to leave the needy aristocracy of the Colony in a hopeless minority. Wirt strongly pictures the mortification and anger of the colonial gentlemen, the envy and terror with which they looked upon him, scornful of his rustic coarseness and yet forced to praise his genius, and in contrast with this aristocratic disfavor the extraordinary popular favor into which he had sprung upon his first appearance in the Assembly. It was in this wholly accidental state of things that Mr. Henry when the session was within three days of its expected close and there seemed no prospect of any

step being taken on the aristocratic and conservative side of the House, brought forward his resolutions on the stamp act. On the back of Henry's own paper containing the resolutions, he himself wrote as follows: "The within resolutions passed the House of Burgesses in May, 1765. They formed the first opposition to the stamp act, and the scheme of taxing America by the British Parliament. All the Colonies, either through fear or want of opportunity to form an opposition, or from influence of some kind or other, had remained silent. I had been for the first time elected a burgess a few days before, was young, inexperienced, unacquainted with the forms of the House and the members that composed it. Finding the men of weight averse to opposition, and the commencement of the tax at hand, and that no person was likely to step forth I determined to venture, and alone, unadvised, and unassisted, on a blank leaf of an old law-book wrote the within. Upon offering them to the House violent debates ensued. Many threats were uttered and much abuse cast on me by the party for submission. After a long and warm contest the resolutions passed by a very small majority, perhaps of one or two only. The alarm spread throughout America with astonishing quickness and the ministerial party were overwhelmed. The great point of resistance to British taxation was universally established in the Colonies. This brought on the war which finally separated the two countries and gave independence to ours."

Two members only were shown the resolutions before they were offered to the Assembly: John Fleming, a member for Cumberland county, and George Johnston, for Fairfax. Of the five resolutions as given in Henry's own copy, the first four did little more than to reaffirm the principles advanced in the address, memorial, and

remonstrance of the preceding year, asserting the exclusive right of the Colony to tax itself, but the stamp act having been meanwhile passed, they necessarily became not a plea against contemplated wrong but bold condemnation of it already accomplished, while the fifth and last resolution, declaring that the action taken by the British Parliament had "a manifest tendency to destroy British as well as American freedom," amounted to a direct charge of tyranny and despotism against the government of King George. Action so broad and bold went beyond what many ardent advocates of colonial right, in view of the feeble and defenseless condition of the Colonies, hardly dared to take, and not only the aristocracy in the Assembly but many who later became leading spirits of the Revolution resisted the adoption of the resolutions. Mr. Jefferson writing of the matter from memory said: "Mr. Henry moved and Mr. Johnston seconded these resolutions successively. They were opposed by Messrs. Randolph, Bland, Pendleton, Wythe, and all the old members whose influence in the House had till then been unbroken. They did it not from any question of our rights, but on the ground that the same sentiments had been at their preceding session expressed in a more conciliatory form to which the answers were not yet received. But torrents of sublime eloquence from Henry, backed by the solid reasoning of Johnston, prevailed. The last, however, and strongest resolution was carried but by a single vote, and I well remember that after the numbers on the division were told and declared from the chair, Peyton Randolph, the Attorney-General, came out at the door where I was standing and said as he entered the lobby: 'By G—d, I would have given 500 guineas for a single vote;' for one vote would have divided the House, and Robinson was in the chair, who, he knew, would have negatived the

resolution." Jefferson was at this time only an onlooker, a young man 22 years of age, with no such early maturity as Washington's.]

The importance of this debate and of the vote by which the resolutions were passed was shown by their effects. They were forthwith "adopted everywhere with progressive variations." The spirit of resistance became stronger and stronger, and by the 1st of November, when the stamp act was, according to its provisions, to have taken effect, its execution had become utterly impracticable.

[Two other resolutions went out with Patrick Henry's as the utterance of Virginia. They were offered, but not by Henry, nor were they acted on. Henry's fifth resolution was rescinded the next day after he had gone home. The vote had been 20 to 19, and Speaker Robinson against them. In Henry's absence, the next day, a motion to rescind was made but succeeded with only the fifth. All the same the five resolutions went everywhere together, and with them the two which had been offered, but on which no action had been taken. They were as follows:

"*Resolved*, That his majesty's liege people, the inhabitants of this colony, are not bound to yield obedience to any law or ordinance whatever, designed to impose any taxation whatsoever upon them, other than the laws or ordinances of the general assembly aforesaid.

"*Resolved*, That any person who shall, by speaking or writing, assert or maintain that any person or persons, other than the general assembly of this colony, have any right or power to impose or lay any taxation on the people here, shall be deemed an enemy to his majesty's colony."]

Immediately after the passage of Mr. Henry's resolutions the Lieutenant-Governor (Fauquier) dissolved the Assembly and issued writs for a new election. But this

was only a fruitless opposition to the popular will which was bearing down all before it. In point of fact, "the minds of the Americans underwent a total transformation. Instead of their late peaceable and steady attachment to the British nation, they were daily advancing to the opposite extreme."

[At the election for Fairfax county, in which Mount Vernon lies, Washington was elected for that county, July 16, 1765, by 201 votes, to 148 for the other Burgess elected. Washington wrote to a friend, August 2, 1765: "I changed the scene from Frederick to this county and had an easy and creditable pool." When Washington was first elected to the House of Burgesses he was at the head of the Virginia troops on the frontier, with headquarters at Winchester in Frederick county, and it was the Winchester people who first took in hand to have him elected a Burgess, and of course for their own county.]

The historian, Dr. Ramsay, who was a student at Princeton College when the stamp act was passed, thus records the manner of its reception by the colonists:

A new mode of displaying resentment against the friends of the stamp act began in Massachusetts and was followed by the other Colonies. A few gentlemen hung out early in the morning (August 14, 1765), on the limb of a large tree toward the entrance of Boston, two effigies, one designed for the stamp master, the other for a jackboot with a head and horns peeping out at the top. Great numbers, both from town and country, came to see them. A spirit of enthusiasm was diffused among the spectators. In the evening the whole was cut down and carried in procession by the populace, shouting "liberty and property forever, no stamps." They next pulled down a new building, lately erected by Mr. Oliver, the stamp master. They then went to his house, before which they beheaded his effigy and at the same time broke his windows.

Eleven days after, similar violences were repeated. The mob attacked the house of Mr. William Story, deputy register of the court of admiralty, shattered his windows, broke into his dwelling-house, and destroyed the books and files belonging to the said court, and ruined a great part of his furniture. They next proceeded to the house of Benjamin Hallowel, comptroller of the customs, and repeated similar excesses and drank and destroyed his liquors. They afterward proceeded to the house of Mr. Hutchinson and soon demolished it. They carried off his plate, furniture, and apparel, and scattered or destroyed manuscripts and other curious and useful papers, which for thirty years he had been collecting. About half a dozen of the meanest of the mob were soon after taken up and committed, but they either broke jail or otherwise escaped all punishment. The town of Boston condemned these proceedings, and for some time private gentlemen kept watch at night to prevent further violence.

Similar disturbances broke out in the adjacent Colonies nearly about the same time. On the 27th of August (1765), the people of Newport, in Rhode Island, exhibited three effigies intended for Messrs. Howard, Moffatt, and Johnson, in a cart with halters about their necks, and after hanging them on a gallows for some time, cut them down and burnt them amid the acclamations of thousands. On the day following, the people collected at the house of Mr. Martin Howard, a lawyer who had written in defense of the right of Parliament to tax the Americans, and demolished everything that belonged to it. They proceeded to Dr. Moffatt's, who in conversation had supported the same right, and made a similar devastation of his property.

In Connecticut they exhibited effigies in various places, and afterward committed them to the flames.

In New York the stamp master having resigned, the stamp papers were taken into Fort George by Lieutenant-Governor Colden (November 1, 1765). The people, disliking his political sentiments, broke open his stable, took out his coach, and carried it in triumph through the principal streets to the gallows. On one end of this they suspended the effigy of the Lieutenant-Governor, having in the right hand a stamped bill of lading and in the other a figure of the devil. After some time they carried the apparatus to the gate of the fort and from thence to the bowling green, under the muzzles of the guns, and burned the whole amid the acclamations of many thousands. They went thence to Major James's house, stripped it of every article, and consumed the whole because he was a friend to the stamp act.

The next evening the mob reassembled and insisted upon the Lieutenant-Governor delivering the stamped papers into their hands, and threatened, in case of a refusal, to take them by force. After some negotiation it was agreed that they should be delivered to the Corporation, and they were deposited in the City Hall. Ten boxes of the same, which came by another conveyance, were burned.

The stamp act was not less odious to many of the inhabitants of the British West India Islands than to those on the continent of North America. The people of St. Kitts obliged the stamp officer and his deputy to resign. Barbadoes, Canada, and Halifax submitted to the act.

When the ship which brought the stamp papers to Philadelphia first appeared round Gloucester point, all the vessels in the harbor hoisted their colors half-mast high. The bells were rung muffled till evening, and every countenance added to the appearance of sincere mourning. A large number of people assembled and endeavored to procure the resignation of Mr. Hughes, the stamp dis-

tributor. He held out long, but at length found it necessary to comply.

As opportunities offered, the Assemblies generally passed resolutions asserting their exclusive right to lay taxes on their constituents. The people in their town meetings instructed their representatives to oppose the stamp act.

The expediency of calling a continental congress, to be composed of deputies from each of the provinces, had early occurred to the people of Massachusetts. The Assembly of that province (June 6, 1765) passed a resolution in favor of that measure, and fixed on New York as the place and the second Tuesday of October as the time for holding the same. Soon after they sent circular letters to the speakers of the several Assemblies requesting their concurrence. This first advance toward continental union was seconded in South Carolina before it had been agreed to by any Colony to the southward of New England. The example of this province had considerable influence in recommending the measure to others who were divided in their opinions on the propriety of it.

The Assemblies of Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia wrere prevented by their Governors from sending a deputation to this congress. Twenty-eight deputies from Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and South Carolina met at New York, and after mature deliberation agreed on a declaration of their rights and on a statement of their grievances (October 7, 1765). They asserted in strong terms their exemption from all taxes not imposed by their own representatives. They also concurred in a petition to the King, and memorial to the House of Lords, and a petition to the House of Commons.

The Colonies that were prevented from sending representatives to this congress forwarded petitions similar to those which were adopted by the deputies which attended.

While a variety of legal and illegal methods were adopted to oppose the stamp act, the 1st of November (1765), on which it was to commence its operation, approached. The day in Boston was ushered in by a funeral tolling of bells. Many shops and stores were shut. The effigies of the planners and friends of the stamp act were carried about the streets in public derision and then torn in pieces by the enraged populace. It was remarkable that though a large crowd was assembled there was not the least violence or disorder.

At Portsmouth, in New Hampshire, the morning (November 1, 1765) was ushered in with tolling all the bells in town. In the course of the day notice was given to the friends of Liberty to attend her funeral. A coffin neatly ornamented, inscribed with the word *Liberty* in large letters was carried to the grave. The funeral procession began from the State House attended with two unbraced drums. While the inhabitants who followed the coffin were in motion, minute guns were fired and continued till the corpse arrived at the place of interment. Then an oration in favor of the deceased was pronounced. It was scarcely ended before the corpse was taken up, it having been perceived that some remains of life were left, at which the inscription was immediately altered to "Liberty revived." The bells immediately exchanged their melancholy for a more joyful sound, and satisfaction appeared in every countenance. The whole was conducted with decency and without injury or insult to any man's person or property.

In Maryland the effigy of the stamp master, on one side of which was written "Tyranny," on the other "Op-

pression," was carried through the streets from the place of confinement to the whipping-post and from thence to the pillory. After suffering many indignities, it was first hanged and then burnt.

The general aversion to the stamp act was by similar methods in a variety of places demonstrated. It is remarkable that the proceedings of the populace on these occasions were carried on with decorum and regularity. They were not ebullitions of a thoughtless mob, but for the most part planned by leading men of character and influence, who were friends to peace and order. These, knowing well that the bulk of mankind are more led by their feelings than by their reason, conducted the public exhibitions on that principle with a view of making the Stamp Act and its friends both ridiculous and odious.

Though the Stamp Act was to have operated from the 1st of November (1765), yet legal proceedings in the courts were carried on as before. Vessels entered and departed without stamped papers. The printers boldly printed and circulated their newspapers, and found a sufficient number of readers though they used common paper in defiance of the act of Parliament. In most departments, by common consent, business was carried on as though no Stamp Act had existed. This was accompanied by spirited resolutions to risk all consequences, rather than submit to use the paper required by law. While these matters were in agitation the colonists entered into associations against importing British manufactures till the Stamp Act should be repealed. In this manner British liberty was made to operate against British tyranny. Agreeably to the free Constitution of Great Britain, the subject was at liberty to buy or not to buy as he pleased.

By suspending their future purchases on the repeal of

the Stamp Act, the colonists made it the interest of merchants and manufacturers to solicit for that repeal. They had usually taken off so great a proportion of British manufactures, that the sudden stoppage of all their orders, amounting annually to several millions sterling, threw some thousands in the mother country out of employment, and induced them, from a regard to their town interest, to advocate the measures wished for by America. The petitions from the Colonies were seconded by petitions from the merchants and manufacturers of Great Britain. What the former prayed for as a matter of right and connected with their liberties, the latter also solicited from motives of immediate advantage.

In order to remedy the deficiency of British goods, the colonists betook themselves to a variety of necessary domestic manufactures. In a little time large quantities of coarse and common cloths were brought to market, and these, though dearer and of a worse quality, were cheerfully preferred to similar articles imported from Britain. That wool might not be wanting, they entered into resolutions to abstain from eating lamb. Foreign elegancies were generally laid aside.

The women were as exemplary as the men in various instances of self-denial. With great readiness they refused every article of decoration for their persons, and of luxury for their tables. These restrictions which the colonists had voluntarily imposed on themselves were so well observed that multitudes of artificers in England were reduced to great distress, and some of their most flourishing manufactories were in a great measure at a stand. An association was entered into by many of the Sons of Liberty, the name given to those who were opposed to the Stamp Act, by which they agreed "to march with the utmost expedition, at their own proper cost and

expense, with their whole force, to the relief of those that should be in danger from the Stamp Act or its promoters and abettors, or anything relative to it, on account of anything that may have been done in opposition to its obtaining." This was subscribed by so many in New York and New England that nothing but a repeal could have prevented the immediate commencement of a civil war.

From the decided opposition to the Stamp Act which had been adopted by the Colonies, it became necessary for Great Britain to enforce or to repeal it. Both methods of proceeding had supporters. The opposers of a repeal urged arguments drawn from the dignity of the nation, the danger of giving way to the clamors of the Americans, and the consequences of weakening parliamentary authority over the Colonies.

On the other hand it was evident from the determined opposition of the Colonies, that it could not be enforced without a civil war by which in every event the nation must be a loser. In the course of these discussions, Dr. Franklin was examined at the bar of the House of Commons, and gave extensive information on the state of American affairs and the impolicy of the Stamp Act, which contributed much to remove prejudices and to produce a disposition that was friendly to a repeal.

Some speakers of great weight in both Houses of Parliament denied their right of taxing the Colonies. The most distinguished supporters of this opinion were Lord Camden, in the House of Peers, and Mr. Pitt, in the House of Commons. The former in strong language said: "My position is this, I repeat it, I will maintain it to my last hour: Taxation and representation are inseparable. This position is founded on the laws of nature. It is more, it is itself an eternal law of nature. For whatever is

a man's own is absolutely his own. No man has a right to take it from him without his consent. Whoever attempts to do it attempts an injury, whoever does it commits a robbery."

Mr. Pitt, with an original boldness of expression, justified the colonists in opposing the Stamp Act. "You have no right," said he, "to tax America. I rejoice that America has resisted. Three millions of our fellow subjects, so lost to every sense of virtue as tamely to give up their liberties, would be fit instruments to make slaves of the rest." He concluded with giving his advice that the Stamp Act be repealed absolutely, totally, and immediately — that the reason for the repeal be assigned, that it was founded on an erroneous principle. "At the same time," said he, "let the sovereign authority of this country over the Colonies be asserted in as strong terms as can be devised, and be made to extend to every point of legislation whatsoever, that we may bind their trade, confine their manufactures, and exercise every power except that of taking their money out of their pockets without their consent."

The approbation of this illustrious statesman, whose distinguished abilities had raised Great Britain to the highest pitch of renown, inspired the Americans with additional confidence in the rectitude of their claims of exemption from parliamentary taxation, and emboldened them to further opposition, when, at a future day, as shall be hereafter related, the project of an American revenue was resumed.

After much debating and two protests in the House of Lords, and passing an act "for securing the dependence of America on Great Britain," the repeal of the Stamp Act was finally carried (March 18, 1766).

This event gave great joy in London. Ships in the river

Thames displayed their colors, and houses were illuminated in every part of the city. It was no sooner known in America than the colonists rescinded their resolutions and recommenced their mercantile intercourse with the mother country. They presented their homespun clothes to the poor and imported more largely than ever. The churches resounded with thanksgivings, and their public and private rejoicings knew no bounds. By letters, addresses, and other means, almost all the Colonies showed unequivocal marks of acknowledgment and gratitude.

So sudden a calm recovered after so violent a storm is without a parallel in history. By the judicious sacrifice of one law, the Parliament of Great Britain procured an acquiescence in all that remained.

There were enlightened patriots fully impressed with an idea that the immoderate joy of the colonists was disproportioned to the advantage they had gained.

The Stamp Act, though repealed, was not repealed on American principles. The preamble assigned as the reason thereof, "That the collecting the several duties and revenues, as by the said act was directed, would be attended with many inconveniences and productive of consequences dangerous to the commercial interests of these kingdoms."

Though this reason was a good one in England it was by no means satisfactory in America. At the same time that the Stamp Act was repealed, the absolute, unlimited supremacy of Parliament was, in words, asserted. The opposers of the repeal contended for this as essential; the friends of that measure acquiesced in it to strengthen their party and make sure of their object. Many of both sides thought that the dignity of Great Britain required something of the kind to counterbalance the loss of authority that might result from her yielding to the demands

of the colonists. The act for this purpose was called the Declaratory Act, and was in principle more hostile to American rights than the Stamp Act, for it annulled those resolutions and acts of the provincial assemblies in which they had asserted their right to exemption from all taxes not imposed by their own representatives, and also enacted: "That the Parliament had, and of right ought to have, power to bind the Colonies in all cases whatsoever."

The bulk of the Americans, intoxicated with the advantage they had gained, overlooked this statute which in one comprehensive sentence not only deprived them of liberty and property, but of every right incident to humanity. They considered it as a salvo for the honor of Parliament, in repealing an act which had so lately received their sanction, and flattered themselves it would remain a dead letter, and that although the right of taxation was in words retained, it would never be exercised. Unwilling to contend about paper claims of ideal supremacy, they returned to their habits of good humor with the parent State.

CHAPTER IV.

THE REVOLUTIONARY STORM INCREASING.

1766–1768.

DURING the period which has just been passed in review, Washington was quietly residing with his family at Mount Vernon, his pursuits as a planter being varied by occasional visits to his friends in the neighborhood, and to Annapolis, the capital of Maryland, as well as to Williamsburg, where his attendance on the sessions of the House of Burgesses was constant and assiduous. In his visits to Annapolis during the season of gayety he was accompanied by Mrs. Washington, and both enjoyed in a high degree the cultivated and refined society of that capital.

Still Washington was by no means an unobservant or uninterested spectator of what was passing in the political world at this time. That his views were coincident with those of the leading patriots of the time is apparent in his correspondence. Writing to Francis Dandridge, London, in September, 1765, when the Stamp Act was the principal topic in all political circles, he says:* "The Stamp Act imposed on the Colonies by the Parliament of Great Britain engrosses the conversation of the speculative part of the colonists, who look upon this unconstitutional method of taxation as a direful attack upon their liberties and loudly exclaim against the violation. What may be the result of

* Sparks, "Writings of Washington," vol. II, p. 343.

this and of some other (I think I may add ill-judged) measures I will not undertake to determine, but this I may venture to affirm, that the advantage accruing to the mother country will fall greatly short of the expectations of the ministry: for certain it is that our whole substance in a manner flows to Great Britain, and that whatsoever contributes to lessen our importations must be hurtful to her manufacturers. The eyes of the people already begin to be opened, and they will perceive that many luxuries for which we lavish our substance in Great Britain can well be dispensed with, whilst the necessaries of life are mostly to be had within ourselves. This consequently will introduce frugality, and be a necessary incitement to industry. If Great Britain therefore loads her manufacturers with heavy taxes, will it not facilitate such results? They will not compel us I think to give our money for their exports whether we will or not, and I am certain that none of the traders will part with them without a valuable consideration. Where then is the utility of these restrictions?

"As to the Stamp Act regarded in a single view, one and the first bad consequence attending it is, that our courts of judicature must inevitably be shut up, for it is impossible or next to impossible, under our present circumstances, that the act of Parliament can be complied with, were we ever so willing to enforce its execution. And not to say (which alone would be sufficient) that we have not money to pay for the stamps, there are many other cogent reasons which prove that it would be ineffectual. If a stop be put to our judicial proceedings, I fancy the merchants of Great Britain trading to the Colonies will not be among the last to wish for a repeal of the act."

The same opinion of the Stamp Act is expressed in a

letter (July 25, 1767) to a London correspondent after the repeal: "Unseasonable as it may be to take any notice of the repeal of the Stamp Act at this time, yet I cannot help observing that a contrary measure would have introduced very unhappy consequences. Those therefore who wisely foresaw such an event, and were instrumental in procuring the repeal of the act, are, in my opinion, deservedly entitled to the thanks of the well-wishers of Britain and her Colonies, and must reflect with pleasure that through their means many scenes of confusion and distress may have been prevented. Mine they accordingly have and always shall have for their opposition to any act of oppression, and that act could be looked upon in no other light, by every person who would view it in its proper colors. I could wish it were in my power to congratulate you on the success of having the commercial system of these Colonies put upon a more enlarged and extensive footing than it is, because I am well satisfied that it would ultimately redound to the advantage of the mother country so long as the Colonies pursue trade and agriculture, and would be an effectual let to manufacturing among them. The money which they raise would center in Great Britain as certainly as the needle will settle to the pole."

The last passages of this letter show that Washington was by no means satisfied with the existing state of things. He evinces a foreboding of trouble with respect to the commerce of the Colonies. As usual his presentiment was verified. The clause in the repeal of the Stamp Act, declaring that the King and Parliament had power and authority to make laws which should bind the Colonies and people of America in all cases whatever, was reduced to practice in 1767.

As early as the month of January, George Grenville, the

foster-father of the Stamp Act, had proposed "saddling America with £400,000 per annum for the support of the troops," etc. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Charles Townshend, in answering him, fully agreed as to the principle of the Stamp Act itself, only adding that the heats which had prevailed had made it an improper time to press that tax. He treated the distinction between external and internal taxation as ridiculous in the opinion of everybody except the Americans; and he, in short, pledged himself to the House to find a revenue in the Colonies to meet the expenses. Lord Shelburne, like others, was at a loss to conceive what he meant. His lordship however heard from general conversation that Mr. Townshend had a plan for establishing a board of customs in America, and by a new regulation of the tea duty in England and some other alterations, to produce a revenue on imports in America.

"This," added Lord Shelburne, "in many views appears a matter that will require the deepest consideration, at this time especially. Besides I believe the speech I have just mentioned is not the way to make anything go down well in North America."

In fact, at this moment, the Colonies, having had time to consider the Earl of Chatham's declaratory bill, were still more dissatisfied with its extreme principles and strong expressions. Lord Shelburne had letters from the King's Governors inveighing against the insubordinate spirit of the people, and complaining of the resolutions of the Houses of Assembly not to provide the troops with vinegar and other articles, lest their compliance should be deemed a precedent for some new Tax Act.

Chatham, excited by the communication of this intelligence, replied to Lord Shelburne in a violent passion against the Americans, and without expressing any disapprobation of Townshend's exasperating speech and

avowed determination of a new taxation scheme. "America," he says, "affords a gloomy prospect; a spirit of infatuation has taken possession of New York. * * * I foresee confusion will ensue. * * * What demon of discord blows the coals in that devoted province I know not; but they are doing the work of their worst enemies themselves. The torrent of indignation in Parliament will, I apprehend, become irresistible, and they will draw upon their heads national resentment by their ingratitude, and ruin, I fear, upon the whole State by the consequences. But I will not run before the event, as it is possible your lordship may receive an account more favorable."

Meanwhile fresh petitions and remonstrances, and bitter complaints against a new Mutiny Act kept pouring in from the Colonies. Shelburne found himself obliged to speak of the Declaratory Act in a style which could not have been very agreeable to the Earl of Chatham:

"That act," says his lordship, "asserting the right of Parliament, has certainly spread a most unfortunate jealousy and diffidence of government throughout America, and makes them jealous of the least distinction between this country and that, lest the same principle may be extended to taxing them."

Replying, from his easy-chair at Bath, Chatham was more irate than before against the Americans; but he seems to have discovered nothing wrong either in the declaratory bill or in the scheme of his colleague and nominee Townshend. He threw the whole blame upon George Grenville: "The advices from America," he says, "afford unpleasing views. New York has drunk the deepest of the baneful cup of infatuation; but none seem to be quite sober and in full possession of reason. It is a literal truth to say that the Stamp Act, of most unhappy memory, has frightened those irritable and umbrageous people out

of their senses. I foresee that determined not to listen to their real friends, a little more frenzy and a little more time will put them into the hands of their enemies."

His friend Beckford joined in these sentiments, and in the belief, implied by Chatham, that the Americans in making any attempt at resistance would only seal their ruin, Beckford — they all seem to have regarded the matter in a frenzy of passion — exclaims, "The devil has possessed the minds of the North Americans. George Grenville and his Stamp Act raised the foul fiend; a prudent firmness will lay him, I hope, forever."

But there was one public man who took a more correct view of the spirit and power of the American people. He calculated that there were in the provinces at least 200,000 men fit to bear arms, and not only to bear arms, but having arms in their possession, unrestrained by any game laws. "In the Massachusetts government in particular," writes Gerard Hamilton* to Mr. Calcraft, "there is express law, by which every man is obliged to have a musket, a pound of powder, and a pound of bullets always by him, so there is nothing wanting but knapsacks (or old stockings, which will do as well), to equip an army for marching, and nothing more than a Sartorius or a Spartacus at their head requisite to beat your troops and your custom-house officers out of the country, and set your laws at defiance. There is no saying what their leaders may put them upon; but if they are active, clever people, and love mischief as well as I do peace and quiet, they will furnish matter of consideration to the wisest among you, and perhaps dictate their own terms at last, as the Roman people formerly in their famous secession upon the Sacred Mount. For my own part, I think you have no right to tax them, and that every measure built upon this supposed

* This is the gentleman known as Single Speech Hamilton.

right stands upon a rotten foundation, and must consequently tumble down, perhaps upon the heads of the workmen."

But few Englishmen, either in Parliament or out, felt these convictions; and though Lord Shelburne clearly foresaw that if the Americans should be driven into insurrection there was every probability that France and Spain would break a peace, the days of which they had already begun to count, Townshend's bill, imposing duties on glass, paper, pasteboard, white and red lead, painters' colors, and tea, payable upon the importation into the Colonies, and to be applied to the purposes specified in the Stamp Act, was carried through both houses of Parliament with as much ease as if it had been a turnpike bill. And the same facility attended another act by which these duties, and all other customs and duties in the American Colonies, were put under the management of the King's resident commissioners. Moreover a third bill was passed, prohibiting the Governor, Council, and Assembly of New York from passing any legislative act for any purposes whatsoever, till satisfaction should be given as to the treatment of the commissioners and troops, and submission paid to the Mutiny Act.

The reader has seen how little the Americans were satisfied with the declaratory bill which accompanied the repeal of the Stamp Act. "The discontents," says a recent writer, "were increased by the endeavors of government to enforce what was styled the Mutiny Act, but what was more properly an act for quartering and better providing for the troops at the expense of the Colonies."

It was an act carried through in a hurry at the fag-end of a session, and yet blindly persevered in.

Lord Shelburne thus describes it in 1767: "It was first suggested by the military, and intended to give a power

of billeting on private houses, as was done in the war. It was altered by the merchants and agents, who substituted empty houses, provincial barracks, and barns in their room, undertaking that the Assembly should supply them with the additional necessaries; and it passed, I believe, without that superintendence or attentive examination on the part of government, which is so wanting in all cases where necessity requires something different from the general principles of the Constitution. I am told that it was carried through by Mr. Ellis without the entire conviction or cordial support of Mr. Grenville, who made it a separate bill, lest it might embarrass the general Mutiny Act."

In depriving the Assembly of New York of its legislative faculties for opposing this act, ministers threw fresh materials into the black cauldron; and then came Charles Townshend's taxes to make it boil over; and then again, as fuel to keep up the fire beneath it, there arrived at Boston the newly-formed American board of commissioners to enforce the payment of the new duties, and to put an end to all smuggling.

Had the Americans admitted the propriety of raising a parliamentary revenue from the Colonies, the appointment of an American board of commissioners among them for managing it would have been a convenience rather than an injury. But, regarding the tax itself as oppressive and illegal, they were offended at the new mode of collecting it. As it was coeval with the new duties, they considered it as a certain evidence that the project of an extensive American revenue, notwithstanding the repeal of the Stamp Act, was still in contemplation. A dislike to British taxation naturally produced a dislike to a board which was to be instrumental in that business, and occasioned many insults to the commissioners.

DRAFTING THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

The Committee — Franklin, Jefferson, Adams, Livingston, and Sherman.

These commissioners could not possibly have been sent to a worse place than Boston. New York, for many reasons, was preferable; but whenever there was a choice to make the Cabinet committed a blunder. The colonists read in the preamble to Charles Townshend's act that the duties were laid for "the better support of government and the administration of the Colonies;" and they detected a clause in the bill which seemed to enable the King, by sign-manual, to establish a general civil list in every province in North America, with salaries, pensions, etc., etc. They instantly declared that all this was unnecessary, unjust, and dangerous to their most important rights; and they insisted that the establishment of any civil list in America, independent of the Assemblies, was altogether illegal.

Charles Townshend, who became very conspicuous among the contemporaries of Washington by originating the duties on tea, painters' colors, etc., which caused so much trouble, had been, in June, 1749, appointed a commissioner of trade and plantations; in the following year, a commissioner for executing the office of lord high admiral; in 1756, a member of the privy council; in March, 1761, secretary at war; in February, 1763, first lord of trade and plantations; in June, 1765, paymaster-general and chancellor of the exchequer; and a lord of the treasury in August, 1766, from which period he remained in office until his decease, which took place on the 4th of September, 1767. Burke, in his great speech on American taxation, said of him: "Perhaps there never arose in this country, nor in any country, a man of more pointed and finished wit, and (where his passions were not concerned) of a more refined, exquisite, and penetrating judgment. If he had not so great a stock, as some have had who flourished formerly, of knowledge long treasured up, he

knew better by far than any man I ever was acquainted with, how to bring together, within a short time, all that was necessary to establish, to illustrate, and to decorate that side of the question he supported. He stated his matter skilfully and powerfully; he particularly excelled in a most luminous explanation and display of his subject. His style of argument was neither trite and vulgar, nor subtle and abstruse. He hit the House just between wind and water, and, not being troubled with too anxious a zeal for any matter in question, he was never more tedious or more earnest than the preconceived opinions and present temper of his hearers required, with whom he was always in perfect unison. He conformed exactly to the temper of the House, and he seemed to guide, because he was always sure to follow it. He had voted and, in the year 1765, had been an advocate for the Stamp Act. He therefore attended at the private meeting in which resolutions leading to its repeal were settled; and he would have spoken for that measure too if illness had not prevented him. The very next session, as the fashion of this world passeth away, the repeal began to be in as bad odor as the Stamp Act had been before. To conform to the temper which began to prevail, and to prevail mostly among those most in power, he declared that revenue must be had out of America. Instantly he was tied down to his engagements — and the whole body of courtiers drove him onward. Here this extraordinary man, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, found himself in great straits: to please universally was the object of his life; but to tax and to please, no more than to love and be wise, is not given to men. However he attempted it."

On the 28th of October, 1767, a few gentlemen met at a private club in Boston, the great center of discontent and pivot of resistance, and arranged plans for making

real and effectual the nonimportation agreements which had been before suggested. They drew up a bond or subscription paper, whereby the parties signing engaged to encourage the use and consumption of native manufactures only, and to cease importing, buying, or selling anything from Great Britain except a few named indispensable articles; and they appointed a committee to obtain subscriptions to this agreement. In this they were successful; but in some instances they found it necessary to employ means for obtaining subscriptions which were decidedly coercive.

In the meantime various individuals took up the pen and employed the press to demonstrate the iniquity of the taxing acts and the little that the American people had to expect from a corrupt and subservient British Parliament. The foremost of these writers was Mr. John Dickinson,* whose "Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania to the Inhabitants of the British Colonies" made a deep and lasting impression. Dickinson however rec-

*Dickinson was a Pennsylvania representative of hesitation to follow in the steps of Patrick Henry.

In June, 1776, he opposed openly, and upon principle, the Declaration of Independence, when the motion was considered by Congress. His arguments were answered by John Adams, Richard Henry Lee, of Virginia, and others, who advocated a separation from Great Britain. The part which Mr. Dickinson took in this debate occasioned his recall from Congress, as his constituents did not coincide with him in political views, and he was absent several years. Perceiving, at length, that his countrymen were unalterably fixed in their system of independence, he fell in with it, and was as zealous in supporting it in Congress, about the year 1780, as any of the members. He was President of Pennsylvania from November, 1782, to October, 1785, and was succeeded in this office by Dr. Franklin. Soon after 1785, it is believed, he removed to Delaware, by which State he was appointed a member of the old Congress, and of which State he was President.

ommended his countrymen still to have recourse to petitions to the Crown and Parliament, and to strong instructions to their agents in England, which, in his opinion, would have the same effect now as they had at the time of the Stamp Act. Other writers suggested more violent measures, but not one of them ventured to hint at the disseverance of the Colonies from the mother country.

On the 15th of February, 1768, the Assembly of Massachusetts addressed a circular letter to all the other Colonies, inviting them to combine in taking measures to defeat the obnoxious act. The Speaker of the New Hampshire Assembly immediately replied, by order of his House, that the sentiments contained in the circular letter were highly approved of; but that, as the time of that House's existence was near expiring, they could not engage for their successors. But other Colonies readily adopted the sentiments and the plan contained in the letter, and passed votes of thanks to the authors of it.

In the month of April (1768), Lord Hillsborough instructed Bernard, the Governor of Massachusetts, to require the House of Representatives, in the King's name, to rescind the resolution which gave birth to the circular letter, and to declare their disapprobation of that rash and hasty proceeding. The House refused compliance, and sent this answer to the Governor: "If the votes of this House are to be controlled by the direction of a minister, we have left us but a vain semblance of liberty. We have now only to inform you that this House has voted not to rescind, and that on a division of the question there were ninety-two nays and seventeen yeas."

The very next day, Governor Bernard, in pursuance of Lord Hillsborough's positive instructions, dissolved the Assembly. By this time associations and committees were formed in most of the provinces.

In the month of June (1768), the sloop Liberty arrived at Boston with a cargo of choice Madeira. The commissioners sent an excise officer on board, but the skipper and his crew confined the man below deck, and smuggled the wine on shore, without entering at the custom-house or any other formula. The officer was then liberated; and the following morning the skipper of the sloop entered at the custom-house four or five pipes, swearing that that was all his cargo. But the commissioners, aware of the truth, ordered a comptroller to seize the sloop and clap the King's broad arrow upon her. As a crowd assembled on the wharves, the comptroller made signals to the Romney man-of-war, which was lying at anchor off Boston, and the captain manned his boats and sent them to assist the excise.

A mob of people attempted to prevent the seizure of the sloop, and pelted the exciseman and the sailors with stones and dirt; but the man-of-war's boats presently cut the sloop from her moorings and carried her under the guns of the Romney.

The mob on shore continued their riot, beating and nearly killing several of the revenue officers. The commissioners applied to the Governor for protection; but the Governor told them he had no troops, no force of any kind, and thereupon they fled on board the Romney. The capture of the sloop Liberty was made on a Friday; Saturday was a busy day, and Sunday was kept very strictly by the New Englanders; but on Monday an immense mob gathered in the streets of Boston, and in the afternoon of that day placards were stuck up to call a meeting of "The Sons of Liberty" on Tuesday, at 10 o'clock. At this meeting they appointed a committee to wait upon the Governor, to inquire why the sloop had been seized in so arbitrary a manner, which they declared to be an affront

to the town of Boston. They declared that she might have been left with perfect safety at the wharf.

The leading men of the town expressed disapprobation of a riot, which not a few of them were suspected of having promoted; but they took care to mention, in extenuation, the extraordinary circumstances of the said seizure, and the violence and unprecedentedness of that procedure. They offered a reward for the discovery of the ringleaders, and a few persons were pointed out, but the grand jury quashed all prosecution. It was this fact which seems to have persuaded the British ministry that offenses in America would not be punished by American juries, and which seems to have recommended to their attention the Statute of Henry VIII, by virtue of which the offenders might be removed to Great Britain and tried there.

The commissioners, who had left the Romney man-of-war to take up their quarters in Castle William, now applied to General Gage, Colonel Dalrymple, and Commodore Wood for troops to support them in their office.

Previously however to this application, and even a month or six weeks before the news of these Boston riots could have reached London, ministers had resolved to employ force, and Lord Hillsborough, in a secret and confidential letter, had told General Gage that it was His Majesty's pleasure that he should forthwith send from Halifax one regiment or more to Boston, to be quartered in that town, to assist the civil magistrates and the officers of revenue.

This letter was dated on the 8th of June (1758); and on the 11th his lordship informed Governor Bernard that His Majesty had directed one regiment at least to be stationed in Boston, and had ordered a frigate, two sloops, and two armed cutters to repair to and remain in the harbor of Boston, in order to support and assist the officers of the customs.

Fresh appeals were made by those who had put themselves in the van of the movement, to the hopes, fears, and strongest passions of the American people; and these addresses usually concluded with the significant truism: "United we conquer, divided we fall." They called upon all the Colonies to resist to the utmost the Mutiny Act, which granted power to every officer, upon obtaining a warrant from any justice, to break into any house by day or by night in search of deserters. They represented that, if the colonists would only cordially agree as to the nonimportation, multitudes in Great Britain, who lived and thrived by their trade, would be reduced to want, and would then, in their desperation, force from Parliament the repeal of the acts.

In the month of August, the merchants and traders of Boston agreed upon a new subscription paper to this effect: "We will not send for, or import from, Great Britain, either upon our own account, or upon commission this fall, any other goods than what are already ordered for the fall supply. We will not send for or import any kind of goods or merchandise from Great Britain, etc., from the 1st of January, 1769, to the 1st of January, 1770, except salt, coals, fish-hooks and lines, hemp and duck, bar-lead and shot, wool-cards, and card-wire. We will not purchase of any factor or others any kind of goods imported from Great Britain, from January, 1769, to January, 1770. We will not import on our own account or on commission, or purchase of any who shall import from any other Colony in America, from January, 1769, to January, 1770, any tea, paper, glass, or other goods, commonly imported from Great Britain. We will not, from and after the 1st of January, 1769, import into this province any tea, glass, paper, or painters' colors, until the act imposing duties on these articles shall be absolutely repealed."

Although this paper was generally subscribed, several respectable merchants refused their signatures. In the course of the same month the merchants of Connecticut and New York made similar agreements, and in the beginning of September (1768) the merchants of Salem did the same. It appears that it was not till the beginning of September that the people of Boston became fully aware of the intention of government to send troops. On the 12th of that month a meeting was called, and a committee appointed to make inquiries of the Governor, and to pray him at the same time to convene a General Assembly.

Governor Bernard said that he had intelligence, of a private nature, that a military force was coming; and that, as to the calling of another Assembly, it was a measure not to be complied with till he had received the commands of His Majesty. It was then resolved, "That the freeholders and other inhabitants of the town of Boston will, at the peril of their lives and fortunes, take all legal and constitutional measures to defend the rights, liberties, privileges, and immunities granted in their royal charter."

The inhabitants further agreed that a suitable number of persons should now be chosen to act for them as a committee in convention, and to consult and to advise with such as might be sent to join them from the other towns of the province. They fixed a convention to be held at Faneuil Hall, in Boston, on the 22d of September (1768); and, before breaking up, they voted, "That as there is an apprehension in the minds of many of an approaching war with France, those inhabitants who are not provided, be requested to furnish themselves forthwith with arms." This was significant! The approaching war with France was nothing but an ingenious device.

On the 22d of September, the day appointed, the con-

vention, consisting of deputies from eight districts and ninety-six towns, met at Faneuil Hall; but the day before the men-of-war and transports had arrived in Nantasket Roads, a few miles below Boston. The convention merely conferred and consulted, petitioned the Governor, expressed their aversion to standing armies, tumults, and disorders of all kinds, and then adjourned.

Governor Bernard then attempted to prevail upon the town council to provide quarters for the troops in Boston; but they refused, and stated that the troops, by act of Parliament, were to be quartered in the barracks; that there were barracks enough at Castle William to hold them all, and that it was against law to bring any of them into the town.

Colonel Dalrymple, who held the command, had positive orders to land at least one regiment at Boston, and he of himself concluded it would be better not to separate his small force. Accordingly, on the last day of September, he left Nantasket Roads and sailed up to Boston. The ships-of-war, consisting of the Romney of sixty guns, the Luancester of forty, the Mermaid of twenty-eight, the Beaver of fourteen, the Senegal of fourteen, the Boreta of ten, and several armed schooners, came to anchor with springs on their cables, with their guns ready shotted, and their broadsides covering the town.

Resistance was expected, but none offered; and on the following day, the 1st of October, 1768, Colonel Dalrymple landed the two regiments he had brought with him, the Twenty-seventh and the Fourteenth, who, with train of artillery and all, did not much exceed 700 men. They marched from the landing place up to the Common, on the outside of Boston, with drums beating, fifes playing, and colors flying.

In the evening the town council was again required to

quarter the two regiments in the town, and again they refused, quoting charters and acts of Parliament. One of the regiments, who had brought with them no tents or camp equipage of any kind, were permitted, or, which is more probable, took permission themselves, to occupy Faneuil Hall; the other regiment lay out all night on the cold Common. The following being the Lord's day, no business could be done; and the puritanical Bostonians were seriously annoyed at the desecration of the Sabbath day by drums and fifes — sounds hitherto unknown on that day in the provinces of New England.

Pressed by Colonel Dalrymple and his officers, the Governor, toward evening, ordered the State House to be opened to the regiment which was encamped on the Common. The soldiers instantly came in and took possession of every part of that public building except the great council chamber. Two field pieces were placed in front of the edifice, and the main guard was posted at a few yards' distance.

These proceedings excited deep resentment and caused, besides, many inconveniences, for the lower part of the State House had been used by the merchants as an exchange, and the members of the town council could no longer get to their hall to transact their business without passing through files of soldiers. Having thus obtained quarters, the Governor and Colonel Dalrymple required the council to provide barrack provisions, as regulated by the Mutiny Act. The council resolutely replied that they would furnish nothing and do nothing that might be construed into a submission to that obnoxious law.

For the present the Bostonians and their neighbors suppressed their vindictive feelings, but the tranquillity was every moment exposed to the chances of sudden interruption and bloodshed; every one of them looked upon the

soldiers as forcible intruders, slavish instruments of tyranny, men without faith or morals; and every soldier had been taught to consider the colonists as smugglers, canting hypocrites, and rebels to a most gracious King.

At the same time, all possible care was taken by the Bostonians to impart a highly-colored picture of the injuries and insults they endured to every part of British America. Philadelphia, which had hitherto been inclined to moderation and compromises, now spoke in a louder tone; and other towns which had been violent from the beginning now became still more decided in their opposition to the acts of Parliament.

Meanwhile the storm thickened at Boston. At the end of May the Assembly, being called together, a committee from the House of Representatives remonstrated with the Governor, complaining of an armament investing their metropolis, of the military guard, of cannon pointed at the door of their State House, and requesting his excellency, as His Majesty's representative, to give effectual orders for the removal of the ships and troops. Governor Bernard, who had certainly become less courteous since the arrival of the armament, replied, dryly: "Gentlemen, I have no authority over His Majesty's ships in this port, or over his troops within this town."

A few days after, the House declared that the use of the military power to enforce the execution of the laws was inconsistent with the spirit of a free Constitution, and that they would not do any business, surrounded as they were with an armed force, threatening their privileges and their personal security. The Governor thought to remove the latter strong objection by adjourning the Assembly to Cambridge, a village situated at a distance of three miles from Boston, in which there were no troops. But they were not likely to be more compliant at Cam-

bridge than they had been at Boston. They voted, "That the establishment of a standing army in this Colony, in time of peace, is an invasion of natural rights; that a standing army is not known as a part of the British Constitution; that sending an armed force into the Colony, under a pretence of assisting the civil authority, is highly dangerous to the people, unprecedented, and unconstitutional."

They refused to make any provision for the troops, and they were thereupon prorogued by the Governor, to meet at Boston in the month of January, 1770.

The King, to testify his approbation, created Governor Bernard a baronet, and took upon himself the whole expense of passing the patent. Sir Francis left the Colony on the 1st of August, as poor as when he came there eleven years before, and followed by few regrets. His departure for England was signalized in Boston by public rejoicings, the firing of cannon, bonfires, ringing of bells, and display of flags.*

* Mr. Bancroft, in his "History of the United States," gives Governor Bernard a very bad character, charging him with avarice, duplicity, and bad faith toward his own government as well as the colonists. His bad conduct in the government was ultimately serviceable however by widening the breach between the colonists and the mother country.

CHAPTER V.

WASHINGTON'S PLAN OF ASSOCIATION.

1769.

IT will have been observed by the reader that the principal means upon which the colonists relied for coercing the British Government into a repeal of Townshend's oppressive revenue bill was the forming of associations, bound by voluntary engagement, not to import or use the articles which were loaded with the obnoxious duty. This was more efficient than petitions and remonstrances, or even mobs and riots in resistance to the law. It was carrying the war into the enemy's country by bringing loss and distress on British manufacturers and merchants, and thus rendering the revenue laws unpopular in the mother country.

This nonimportation system was cordially approved by Washington, as we shall presently see. He and his friend, George Mason, were in favor of going a step farther and establishing what would nearly have amounted to complete nonintercourse with England, by refusing to export to that country the commodities which they were accustomed to receive from this country, and especially tobacco, from which the British Government derived an immense revenue.

Washington, writing to George Mason under date of April 5, 1769, thus expressed himself:

"At a time when our lordly masters in Great Britain

will be satisfied with nothing less than the deprivation of American freedom, it seems highly necessary that something should be done to avert the stroke and maintain the liberty which we have derived from our ancestors. But the manner of doing it, to answer the purpose effectually, is the point in question.

"That no man should scruple or hesitate a moment to use arms in defense of so valuable a blessing is clearly my opinion. Yet arms, I would beg leave to add, should be the last resource, the *dernier* resort. We have already, it is said, proved the inefficacy of addresses to the throne, and remonstrances to Parliament. How far then their attention to our rights and privileges is to be awakened or alarmed, by starving their trade and manufacturers, remains to be tried.

"The northern Colonies, it appears, are endeavoring to adopt this scheme. In my opinion it is a good one, and must be attended with salutary effects, provided it can be carried pretty generally into execution. But to what extent it is practicable to do so I will not take upon me to determine. That there will be a difficulty attending the execution of it everywhere, from clashing interests, and selfish, designing men, ever attentive to their own gain, and watchful of every turn that can assist their lucrative views, cannot be denied; and in the tobacco Colonies, where the trade is so diffused, and in a manner wholly conducted by factors for their principals at home (in England), these difficulties are certainly enhanced, but I think not insurmountably increased, if the gentlemen in their several counties will be at some pains to explain matters to the people, and stimulate them to cordial agree-

ments to purchase none but certain enumerated articles out of any of the stores after a definite period, and neither import nor purchase any themselves. This, if it should not effectually withdraw the factors from their importations, would at least make them extremely cautious in doing it, as the prohibited goods could be vended to none but the nonassociators, or those who would pay no regard to their association; both of whom ought to be stigmatized and made the objects of public reproach.

"The more I consider a scheme of this sort, the more ardently I wish success to it, because I think there are private as well as public advantages to result from it — the former certain, however precarious the other may prove. In respect to the latter, I have always thought that, by virtue of the same power which assumes the right of taxation, the Parliament may attempt, at least, to restrain our manufacturers, especially those of a public nature, the same equity and justice prevailing in the one case as the other, it being no greater hardship to forbid my manufacturing than it is to order me to buy goods loaded with duties, for the express purpose of raising a revenue. But as a measure of this sort would be an additional exertion of arbitrary power, we cannot be placed in a worse condition, I think, by putting it to the test.

"On the other hand, that the Colonies are considerably indebted to Great Britain is a truth universally acknowledged. That many families are reduced almost, if not quite, to penury and want by the low ebb of their fortunes, and that estates are selling for the discharge of debts, the public papers furnish too melancholy proofs. That a scheme of this sort will contribute more effectually than any other that can be devised to extricate the country from the distress it at present labors under, I most firmly believe, if it can be generally adopted. And I can

see but one class of people, the merchants excepted, who will not, or ought not, to wish well to the scheme, namely, they who live genteelly and hospitably on clear estates. Such as these, were they not to consider the valuable object in view and the good of others, might think it hard to be curtailed in their living and enjoyments. As to the penurious man, he would thereby save his money and his credit, having the best plea for doing that which before perhaps he had the most violent struggles to refrain from doing. The extravagant and expensive man has the same good plea to retrench his expenses. He would be furnished with a pretext to live within bounds and embrace it. Prudence dictated economy before, but his resolution was too weak to put it in practice; 'For how can I,' says he, 'who have lived in such and such a manner, change my method? I am ashamed to do it, and besides such an alteration in the system of my living will create suspicions of the decay of my fortune, and such a thought the world must not harbor.' He continues his course till at last his estate comes to an end, a sale of it being the consequence of his perseverance in error. This, I am satisfied, is the way that many who have set out in the wrong track have reasoned till ruin has stared them in the face. And in respect to the needy man, he is only left in the same situation that he is found in — better, I may say, because, as he judges from comparison, his condition is amended in proportion as it approaches nearer to those above him.

"Upon the whole therefore I think the scheme a good one, and that it ought to be tried here, with such alterations as our circumstances render absolutely necessary. But in what manner to begin the work is a matter worthy of consideration. Whether it can be attempted with propriety or efficacy, further than a communication of senti-

ments to one another before May (1769), when the court and Assembly will meet at Williamsburg, and a uniform plan can be concerted, and sent into the different counties to operate at the same time and in the same manner everywhere, is a thing upon which I am somewhat in doubt, and I should be glad to know your opinion."*

The following is an extract from Mr. Mason's reply to this letter, dated the same day:

"I entirely agree with you that no regular plan of the sort proposed can be entered into here, before the meeting of the General Court at least, if not of the Assembly. In the meantime, it may be necessary to publish something preparatory to it in our gazettes, to warn the people of the impending danger and induce them the more readily and cheerfully to concur in the proper measures to avert it; and something of this sort I had begun, but am unluckily stopped by a disorder which affects my head and eyes. As soon as I am able I shall resume it, and then write you more fully or endeavor to see you. In the meantime, pray commit to writing such hints as may occur.

"Our all is at stake, and the little conveniences and comforts of life, when set in competition with our liberty, ought to be rejected, not with reluctance, but with pleasure. Yet it is plain that in the tobacco Colonies we cannot at present confine our importations within such narrow bounds as the northern Colonies. A plan of this kind, to be practicable, must be adapted to our circumstances; for if not steadily executed, it had better have remained unattempted. We may retrench all manner of superfluities, finery of all descriptions, and confine ourselves to linens, woollens, etc., not exceeding a certain

* Sparks, "Writings of Washington," vol. II, p. 351.

price. It is amazing how much this practice, if adopted in all the Colonies, would lessen the American imports and distress the various traders and manufacturers in Great Britain.

"This would awaken their attention. They would see, they would feel, the oppressions we groan under, and exert themselves to procure us redress. This once obtained, we should no longer discontinue our importations, confining ourselves still not to import any article that should hereafter be taxed by act of Parliament for raising a revenue in America; for, however singular I may be in my opinion, I am thoroughly convinced that, justice and harmony happily restored, it is not the interest of these Colonies to refuse British manufactures. Our supplying our mother country with gross materials and taking her manufactures in return is the true chain of connection between us. These are the bands, which, if not broken by oppression, must long hold us together by maintaining a constant reciprocation of interest. Proper caution should therefore be used in drawing up the proposed plan of association. It may not be amiss to let the ministry understand that, until we obtain a redress of grievances, we will withhold from them our commodities, and particularly refrain from making tobacco, by which the revenue would lose fifty times more than all their oppressions could raise here.

"Had the hint which I have given with regard to taxation of goods imported into America been thought of by our merchants before the repeal of the Stamp Act, the late American Revenue Acts would probably never have been attempted."*

Mason was not a member of the House of Burgesses

* Sparks, "Writings of Washington," vol. II, p. 354, note.

at this time, but Washington held a seat in that Assembly, and, soon after expressing these opinions, he was to support them there by public acts. The result of this conference with Mason was a scheme, prepared by him to be offered by Washington at the coming session of the House of Burgesses.*

The Governor of Virginia at this time was the liberal and courteous Lord Botetourt.† Governor Fauquier, of

* Bancroft, "History of the United States," vol. VI, p. 273.

[At an election of Burgesses for Fairfax county, December 1, 1768, Washington polled 185 votes, Col. John West, 142, and Capt. John Posey, 87; the two former securing the seats.

George Mason, born in Fairfax county in 1725, author of the nonimportation resolutions which Washington presented in the Virginia Assembly, and which were unanimously adopted, was a neighbor and intimate friend of Washington. He later wrote a powerful tract against the claim of the British Parliament to tax the Colonies without their consent. At a Fairfax county meeting, July 18, 1774, he offered twenty-four resolutions reviewing the whole ground of the controversy with Great Britain; recommending a general congress; and urging the nonintercourse policy. In 1775 he was a member of the Virginia Committee of Safety, and in 1776 he drafted the Declaration of Rights and State Constitution of Virginia, unanimous adoption of which attested universal confidence in his statesmanship. In 1777 he was elected to the Continental Congress, and in 1787 he was one of the leaders of the Virginia delegation in the convention which framed the national Constitution.. In that body he opposed every measure which implied the perpetuation of negro slavery. From this point he, together with Patrick Henry and Richard Henry Lee, fell off from the party of the Constitution headed by Washington, standing out against the proposed Union, as involving peril to State sovereignty; and on this ground he refused election as a member of the United States Senate. He was older than Washington by seven years, one of the best and strongest of Washington's supporters for twenty years, and one of the great names of the Virginia of Washington's time.]

† Botetourt, appointed Governor of Virginia in July, 1768, en-

whom we have frequently made mention, died early in 1768, and Lord Botetourt was his successor. He was extremely anxious to promote a reconciliation between Great Britain and the Colonies. He had become the most popular of all the royal Governors, from not seeming to make the matter at present in dispute personal to himself, or losing his temper, or acting unwisely or unjustly toward the Colonies. As a servant of the Crown he did his duty; but always courteously and with an honest endeavor to allay excitement and prevent those overt acts which his position would require him to censure. We shall presently see him placed in circumstances which called for the exercise of all his good qualities. Had the

tered upon the position in October of the same year and made a popular Governor until his death, October 15, 1770.

In a description of Williamsburg in Howe's "Historical Collections of Virginia," is the following notice of Lord Botetourt's statue in that town:

"In a beautiful square fronting the college, stands the statue of Lord Botetourt, one of the Colonial Governors. It is much mutilated, though still presenting a specimen of elegant sculpture. He appears in the court dress of that day, with a short sword at his side. It was erected in 1774, at the expense of the Colony, and removed in 1797, from the old capitol to its present situation. Its pedestal bears the following inscription:

The Right Honorable Norborne Berkeley, Baron de Botetourt, his majesty's late lieutenant, and governor-general of the colony and dominion of Virginia.

[Right side.] — Deeply impressed with the warmest sense of gratitude for his Excellency's, the Right Honorable Lord Botetourt's, prudent and wise administration, and that the remembrance of those many public and social virtues which so eminently adorned his illustrious character might be transmitted to posterity, the General Assembly of Virginia, on the xx day July, Ann Dom., M.DCC.LXXI, resolved, with one united voice, to erect this statue to his lordship's memory. Let wisdom and justice preside in any country, the people must and will be happy.

[Left side.] — America! behold your friend, who, leaving his

British Parliament adopted his policy toward the colonists, the controversy might have terminated peacefully. But the members of this body seemed bent upon sustaining their oppressive system by force.

In February, 1769, both Houses of Parliament went one step beyond all that had preceded. They then concurred in a joint address to His Majesty, in which they expressed their satisfaction in the measures His Majesty had pursued — gave the strongest assurances that they would effectually support him in such further measures as might be found necessary to maintain the civil magistrates in a due execution of the laws in Massachusetts Bay, and besought him "to direct the Governor to take the most effectual methods for procuring the fullest information touching all treasons, or misprisions of treason, committed within the government since the 30th day of December, 1767; and to transmit the same, together with the names of the persons who were most active in the commission of such offenses, to one of the Secretaries of State, in order that His Majesty might issue a special commission for inquiring of, hearing, and determining the said offenses within the realm of Great Britain, pursuant to the provision of the Statute of the 35th of King Henry VIII."* The latter part of this address, which proposed the bringing of delinquents from Massachusetts

native country, declined those additional honors which were there in store for him, that he might heal your wounds and restore tranquillity and happiness to this extensive continent. With what zeal and anxiety he pursued these glorious objects, Virginia thus bears her grateful testimony."

* The real object of this proposed revival of the Act of 35th of King Henry VIII, was believed to be the arrest of the New England leaders, John Hancock, Samuel Adams, James Otis, Josiah Quincy, Jr., and others, and their transportation to England, thus removing them effectually from the scene of action.

to be tried at a tribunal in Great Britain for crimes committed in America, underwent many severe animadversions.

It was asserted to be totally inconsistent with the spirit of the Constitution; for in England, a man charged with a crime had a right to be tried in the county in which his offense was supposed to have been committed. "Justice is regularly and impartially administered in our courts," said the colonists, "and yet by direction of Parliament, offenders are to be taken by force, together with all such persons as may be pointed out as witnesses, and carried to England, there to be tried in a distant land, by a jury of strangers, and subject to all the disadvantages which result from want of friends, want of witnesses, and want of money."

The House of Burgesses of Virginia, met soon after official accounts of the joint address of Lords and Commons on this subject reached America; and in a few days after their meeting, passed resolutions* expressing "their exclusive right to tax their constituents, and their right to petition their sovereign for redress of grievances, and the lawfulness of procuring the concurrence of the other Colonies in praying for the royal interposition in favor of the violated rights of America; and that all trials for treason, or for any crime whatsoever committed in that Colony, ought to be before His Majesty's courts within the said Colony; and that the seizing any person residing in the said Colony, suspected of any crime whatsoever, committed therein, and sending such person to places beyond the sea to be tried, was highly derogatory of the rights of British subjects." The next day Lord Botetourt sent for the House of Burgesses, and addressed them as

* These resolutions were drafted by Thomas Jefferson, who had just been elected to a seat in the House of Burgesses.

follows: "Mr. Speaker, and gentlemen of the House of Burgesses, I have heard of your resolves, and augur ill of their effects. You have made it my duty to dissolve you, and you are dissolved accordingly."

Not in the least degree deterred from their purpose by this act of duty on the part of the Governor, on the very next day the Burgesses repaired to the Raleigh tavern, and in a room which bore the name of Apollo, they entered into the articles of agreement already referred to as Washington and Mason's scheme, by which they pledged their honor not to import British merchandise so long as the acts of Parliament for raising a revenue in America remained unrepealed.

Among the eighty-eight signatures to this Virginia association were those of George Washington, Peyton Randolph, Patrick Henry, Richard Henry Lee, Thomas Jefferson, and others, who afterward took the lead in the great struggle. On returning to their respective counties, all these Virginia members were re-elected for the next Assembly; and the small minority who had opposed the resolutions were rejected to a man.

The gentlemen and merchants of Maryland and South Carolina followed the example of Virginia, and adopted the articles of association. Pennsylvania, through her merchants, expressed her approval. The Assembly of Delaware adopted the Virginia resolves, "and every Colony south of Virginia." says Bancroft, "in due time followed the example."

Thus Virginia, under the leading of Washington, had nobly come forward to the aid of the New England Colonies, who had recently borne the brunt of parliamentary indignation. This was done too, in defiance of the recent threat of military coercion, and extradition of offenders against the Revenue Acts for trial in England.

"The nonimportation agreement," says Ramsay, "was in this manner forwarded by the very measures which were intended to curb the spirit of American freedom, from which it sprung. Meetings of the associators were regularly held in the various provinces. Committees were appointed to examine all vessels arriving from Britain. Censures were freely passed on such as refused to concur in these associations, and their names published in the newspapers as enemies to their country. The regular acts of the provincial Assemblies were not so much respected and obeyed as the decrees of these committees: the associations were in general, as well observed as could be expected; but nevertheless there were some collusions. The fear of mobs, of public resentment, and contempt, co-operating with patriotism, preponderated over private interest and convenience."

Washington scrupulously observed this agreement; and enjoined upon his London factor to send him none of the interdicted goods, unless the offensive acts of Parliament should in the meantime be repealed.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DISCONTENTS PRODUCE VIOLENCE AND BLOODSHED.

1769–1770.

WHILE British troops were menacing the Bostonians without effect, and Virginia was leading the southern Colonies on to the support of refractory New England, the British Government, still vacillating and uncertain, was already beginning to retract her late proceedings. It was on the 1st of August, 1769, that Sir Francis Bernard was recalled from the government of Massachusetts. A few days before his departure he received letters from the Secretary of State, which, being circular to the several Governors of the continent, were apparently intended to be made public. One of the last acts of his administration was his directing, or authorizing, the publication of the assurance to the people of the Colonies in those letters, "that the administration is well disposed to relieve the Colonies from all 'real' grievances arising from the late acts of revenue. And through the present ministers have concurred in the opinion of the whole Legislature, that no measure ought to be taken which can derogate from the legislative authority of Great Britain over the Colonies, yet they have declared that they have at no time entertained a design to propose any further taxes upon America for the purpose of a revenue; and it is their intention to propose, in the next session of Parliament, to take off the duties upon

glass, paper, and colors, upon consideration of such duties being contrary to the true principles of commerce."

Government in England expected, by this assurance of intended favor, to incline the people to abate their opposition. But it had a very different effect. It was immediately the common language among the candidates for liberty: "Repealing the act upon principles of commerce is a mere pretence, calculated to establish the grievance we complain of. The true reason why the duty upon tea is to continue is to save the 'right' of taxing. Our acquiescing in the repeal of the rest will be construed into an acknowledgment of this 'right.' The fear of trouble, from the discontent of merchants and manufacturers upon our nonimportation agreements, has brought the ministry to consent to this partial repeal. A vigorous enforcement of these agreements will increase the fear, and we shall certainly carry the point we contend for, and obtain a repeal of the whole."

A meeting of the trading classes was called in Boston. The repeal of only part of the act was unanimously resolved to be a measure intended merely to quiet the manufacturers in Great Britain, and to prevent the setting up of manufactures in the Colonies, and one that would by no means relieve trade from its difficulties; it was therefore further resolved, to send for no more goods from Great Britain, a few specified articles excepted, unless the Revenue Acts should be repealed.

A committee was appointed to procure a written pledge from the inhabitants of the town, not to purchase any goods from persons who have imported them, or who shall import them, contrary to the late agreement; and another committee to inspect the manifests of the cargoes of all vessels arriving from Great Britain, and to publish the names of all importers, unless they immediately delivered

their goods into the hands of a committee appointed to receive them.

The intimations of a relaxation in the British system of oppression was received in a different spirit by the Virginians, who at first were effectually deceived by the bland professions of the ministry.

On the 9th of May, 1769, the King in his speech to Parliament highly applauded their hearty concurrence, in maintaining the execution of the laws in every part of his dominions. Five days after this speech, Lord Hillsborough, Secretary of State for the Colonies, wrote to Lord Botetourt: "I can take upon me to assure you, notwithstanding informations to the contrary, from men with factious and seditious views, that His Majesty's present administration have at no time entertained a design to propose to Parliament, to lay any further taxes upon America for the purpose of raising a revenue, and that it is at present their intention to propose to the next session of Parliament, to take off the duties upon glass, paper, and colors, upon consideration of such duties having been laid contrary to the true principles of commerce." The Governor was also informed, that "His Majesty relied upon his prudence and fidelity to make such an explanation of His Majesty's measures as would tend to remove prejudices, and to re-establish mutual confidence and affection between the mother country and the Colonies." In the exact spirit of his instructions, Lord Botetourt addressed the Virginia Assembly as follows: "It may possibly be objected, that as His Majesty's present administration are not immortal, their successors may be inclined to attempt to undo what the present ministers shall have attempted to perform, and to that objection I can give but this answer, that it is my firm opinion, that the plan I have stated to you will certainly take place, and that it

will never be departed from; and so determined am I forever to abide by it, that I will be content to be declared infamous, if I do not to the last hour of my life, at all times, in all places, and upon all occasions, exert every power with which I either am, or ever shall be, legally invested, in order to obtain and maintain for the continent of America that satisfaction which I have been authorized to promise this day, by the confidential servants of our gracious sovereign, who to my certain knowledge rates his honor so high that he would rather part with his crown than preserve it by deceit."

These assurances were received with transports of joy by the Virginians. They viewed them as pledging His Majesty for security, that the late design for raising a revenue in America was abandoned, and never more to be resumed. The Assembly of Virginia, in answer to Lord Botetourt, expressed themselves thus (July, 1769): "We are sure our most gracious sovereign, under whatever changes may happen in his confidential servants, will remain immutable in the ways of truth and justice, and that he is incapable of deceiving his faithful subjects; and we esteem your lordship's information not only as warranted, but even sanctified by the royal word."

How far these promises made by Lord Hillsborough to the Governor of Virginia, and by the Governor to the Assembly, were founded in sincerity and good faith, will be demonstrated by subsequent events. They were probably made with a design to detach the Virginians from the earnest support which they had hitherto given to the people of Massachusetts, who were still the most decided opponents of the British ministry.

Of Lord Hillsborough, who as Colonial Secretary, had written to Lord Botetourt in the conciliatory vein, Dr. Franklin thus speaks in a letter to Samuel Cooper: "His

character is conceit, wrong-headedness, obstinacy, and passion. Those who would speak most favorably of him allow all this; they only add, that he is an honest man, and means well. If that be true, as perhaps it may, I wish him a better place, where only honesty and well-meaning are required, and where his other qualities can do no harm. * * * I hope however that our affairs will not much longer be perplexed and embarrassed by his perverse and senseless management."

The policy of Lord Hillsborough toward the Colonies, bad as it was, was destined to be supported by Lord North, who came into the office of Prime Minister on the 28th of January, 1770.

Having been Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Duke of Grafton's administration, on his grace's resignation, which took place in the end of January, he succeeded him as First Lord of the Treasury, a pre-eminence he held till the close of the American Revolution. His administration will ever be celebrated by the fact, that during its existence Great Britain lost more territory and acquired more debt than in any previous period of her history. His first measure was partially, and unhappily, only partially, of a conciliatory character — a motion for the repeal of the port duties of 1767, with the exception of the duty on tea, which his lordship expressly declared he desired to keep on as an assertion of the supremacy of the Parliament. In vain it was contended that the reservation of this single article would keep up the contention which it was so desirable to allay; that after giving up the prospect of a revenue from the Colonies, it was absurd and impolitic to persevere in the assertion of an abstract claim of right, which, if attempted in any mode to be carried into practice, would produce nothing but civil discord and interminable opposition; that in short, if nothing more

was meant by this omission of the tea in the repeal, then the mere declaration of Parliamentary supremacy, the law already in existence under the title of the Declaratory Act, was abundantly sufficient for this purpose, and that the Americans had hitherto silently acquiesced in that law. To all these arguments Lord North replied: "Has the repeal of the Stamp Act taught the Americans obedience? Has our lenity inspired them with moderation? Can it be proper, while they deny our legal power to tax them, to acquiesce in the argument of illegality, and by the repeal of the whole law, to give up that power? No! the most proper time to exert our right of taxation is when the right is denied. To temporize is to yield; and the authority of the mother country, if it is now unsupported, will, in reality, be relinquished forever. A total repeal cannot be thought of till America is prostrate at our feet."

Governor Pownall, who moved as an amendment, to include the duty on tea, acknowledged, that even the total repeal of the duties in question, though it might be expected to do much, would not restore satisfaction to America. "If," said he, "it be asked, whether it will remove the apprehensions excited by your resolutions and address of the last year, for bringing to trial in England, persons accused of treason in America? I answer, No. If it be asked, if this commercial concession would quiet the minds of the Americans as to the political doubts and fears which have struck them to the heart, throughout the continent? I answer, No. So long as they are left in doubt whether the *Habeas Corpus* Act, whether the bill of rights, whether the common law as now existing in England have any operation and effect in America, they cannot be satisfied. At this hour they know not whether the civil Constitutions be not suspended and superseded by the establishment of a military force. The Americans

think that they have, in return to all their applications, experienced a temper and disposition that is unfriendly, and that the enjoyment and exercise of the common rights of freemen have been refused to them. Never with these views will they solicit the favor of this House; never more will they wish to bring before Parliament, the grievances under which they conceive themselves to labor. Deeply as they feel, they suffer and endure with a determined and alarming silence; for their liberty, they are under no apprehensions. It was first planted under the auspicious genius of the Constitution; it has grown up into a verdant and flourishing tree; and should any severe strokes be aimed at the branches, and fate reduce it to the bare stock, it would only take deeper root, and spring out again more durable than before. They trust to Providence, and wait with firmness and fortitude the issue."

The event proved that Mr. Pownall knew, incomparably better than Lord North, the character and state of the Colonies. During his residence in America, while successively Governor of two of the provinces, he had acquired that knowledge which the British ministry could not, and some provincial Governors would not, acquire.

It might have been supposed, that the very unsatisfactory result of the previous half-measures of this kind would have deterred any minister from a repetition of them. It displays as little knowledge of the construction of the human mind, as attention to the history of popular agitations, to intermingle professions of kindness with threats, or concessions with expressions of insult.

The Colonies however would probably have assumed a less agitated aspect had not other circumstances existed to ferment and perpetuate feelings of hostility. Among these, the continued presence of troops of the line in Boston was one of the most aggravating. The inhabitants

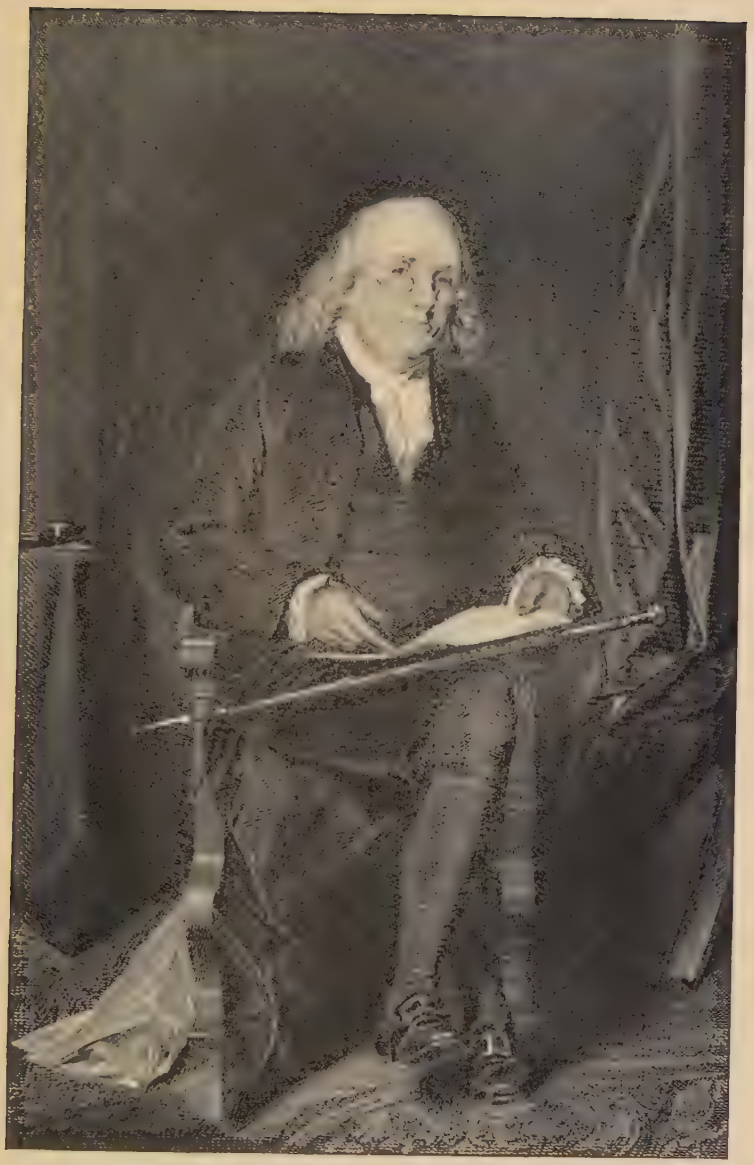
felt that their remaining stationed in the place was designed to overawe and control the expression of their sentiments, and the military appear to have viewed the matter in the same light. Under the excitement that was thus occasioned, affrays were frequently occurring between the populace and the soldiers; and it would appear that, as might be expected, neither party conducted themselves with prudence or forbearance. On the one hand, the soldiers are represented as parading the town armed with heavy clubs, insulting and seeking occasion to quarrel with the people;* while on the other, the populace are declared to be the aggressors, and the military to have acted on the defensive.† It was proposed by Samuel Adams, the most resolute and daring of the Boston patriots, that the General Court should have the soldiers removed to Castle William; but the meeting of that body appointed for the 10th of January (1770), was prorogued by Hutchinson to the middle of March. This was said to be done under an arbitrary instruction of Lord Hillsborough.

A quarrel took place between the merchants who had signed the nonimportation agreement and Hutchinson, whose sons had signed and broken it, by selling tea, in which the Lieutenant-Governor was obliged to yield. This was thought by the British party to furnish a good occasion for an attack on the people by the troops; and Colonel Dalrymple prepared his men for the purpose. But although repeated assemblages took place among the merchants and the people, Hutchinson was afraid to order an attack on them.

Intelligence received from New York of repeated affrays between the people and the soldiers stationed there served

* Bradford, "History of Massachusetts," p. 205.

† Hutchison, p. 270.



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

to increase the ferment in Boston. The soldiers in the latter place were more licentious, and under less restraint from their officers, than they had ever been before; and the boys and idlers exasperated them by calling them rascals, bloody backs, and lobster scoundrels. Matters were rapidly drawing to a crisis.

On the 2d of March (1770), a private soldier of the Twentieth regiment, applying for employment at Gray's rope-walk, was refused in an insulting manner, which led to a boxing-match with one of the ropemakers, in which the soldier was beaten and driven away. He returned with other soldiers. A riot ensued, in which clubs and cutlasses were employed, which was terminated by the interference of Mr. Gray and others. This trifling affair undoubtedly had an influence in producing the more serious collision which took place a few days afterward. In the meantime, the people of the surrounding country sympathized deeply with the Bostonians, and were ready to support them against the soldiers. A great part of the people of Massachusetts had been engaged in military service in the colonial wars.

Early in the evening of the 5th of March, the inhabitants were observed to assemble in different quarters of the town; parties of soldiers were also driving about the streets, as if both the one and the other had something more than ordinary upon their minds. About 8 o'clock, one of the bells of the town was rung in such a manner as if for an alarm of fire. This called the people into the streets. A large number assembled in the market place, not far from King street, armed with bludgeons or clubs.

A small affray between some of the inhabitants and the soldiers arose at or near the barracks, at the west part of the town, but it was of little importance and was soon over. A sentinel who was posted at the custom-house,

not far from the main guard, was next insulted, and pelted with ice and other missiles, which caused him to call to the main guard to protect him.

Notice was soon given to Captain Preston, whose company was then on guard, and a sergeant with six men was sent to protect the sentinel; but the captain, to prevent any precipitate action, followed them himself. There seem to have been but few people collected when the assault was first made on the sentinel; but the sergeant's guard drew a greater number together, and they were more insulted than the sentinel had been, and received frequent blows from snowballs and lumps of ice. Captain Preston thereupon ordered them to charge; but this was no discouragement to the assailants, who continued to pelt the guard, daring them to fire. Some of the people who were behind the soldiers, and observed the abuse of them, called on them to do so. At length one received a blow with a club, which brought him to the ground; but rising again he immediately fired, killing a mulatto named Crispus Attucks; all the rest of the soldiers fired, except one.

This seems, from the evidence on the trials, and the observation of persons present, to have been the course of the material facts. Three men were killed, two mortally wounded, who died soon after, and several slightly wounded. The soldiers immediately withdrew to the main guard, which was strengthened by additional companies. Two or three of the persons who had seen the action ran to the Lieutenant-Governor's (Hutchinson's) house,*

* Hutchison, as Lieutenant-Governor, had succeeded Sir Francis Bernard in the administration of affairs in Massachusetts. He was subsequently appointed Governor. Although an American by birth he was a bitter Tory; and excelled even the Earl of Strafford himself in tyranny and duplicity. His character is well described by Mr. Bancroft in his "History of the United States," vol. VI, pp. 303–306.

which was about half a mile distant, and begged he would go to King street,* where they feared a general action would come on between the troops and the inhabitants. He went immediately; and to satisfy the people, called for Captain Preston, and inquired why he had fired upon the inhabitants without the direction of a civil magistrate. The noise was so great that his answer could not be understood; and some persons, who were apprehensive of the Lieutenant-Governor's danger from the general confusion called out: "The town-house! The town-house!" when, with irresistible violence, he was forced up by the crowd into the council chamber.

There demand was immediately made of him to order the troops to withdraw from the town-house into their barracks. He refused; but calling from the balcony to the great body of people who remained in the street, he expressed his great concern at the unhappy event; assured them he would do everything in his power to obtain a full and impartial inquiry, that the law might have its course; and advised them to go peaceably to their homes. Upon this there was a cry, "Home, home!" and a great part separated and went home. He then signified his opinion to Lieutenant-Colonel Carr, that if the companies in arms were ordered to their barracks the streets would be cleared, and the town in quiet for that night. Upon their retiring, the rest of the inhabitants, except those in the council chamber, retired also.

Lieutenant-Colonel Dalrymple, at the desire of the Lieutenant-Governor, came to the council chamber, where several justices were examining persons who were present at the transaction of the evening. From the evidence, it was apparent that the justices would commit Captain Preston, if taken. Several hours passed before he could

* Now called State street.

be found, and the people suspected that he would not run the hazard of a trial; but at length he surrendered himself to a warrant for apprehending him, and having been examined, was committed to prison. The next morning, the soldiers who were upon guard surrendered also, and were committed.

This was not sufficient to satisfy the people, and early in the forenoon they were in motion again. The Lieutenant-Governor caused his council to be summoned, and desired the two lieutenant-colonels of the regiments to be present. The selectmen of Boston were waiting for the Lieutenant-Governor's coming to council, and being admitted, made their representation, that from the contentions arising from the troops quartered in Boston, and above all, from the tragedy of the last night, the minds of the inhabitants were exceedingly disturbed; that they would presently be assembled in a town meeting; and that unless the troops should be removed, the most terrible consequences were to be expected.

The justices, also of Boston, and several of the neighboring towns, had assembled and desired to signify their opinion, that it would not be possible to keep the people under restraint if the troops remained in town. The Lieutenant-Governor acquainted both the selectmen and the justices, that he had no authority to alter the place of destination of the King's troops; but that he had expected the commanding officers of the two regiments, and would let them know the applications which had been made. Presently after their coming, a large committee from the town meeting presented an address to the Lieutenant-Governor, declaring it to be the unanimous opinion of the meeting, that nothing could rationally be expected to restore the peace of the town, "and prevent blood and carnage," but the immediate removal of the troops.

The committee withdrew into another room to wait for an answer. Some of the council urged the necessity of complying with the people's demand; but the Lieutenant-Governor declared that he would, upon no consideration whatever, give orders for their removal. Lieutenant-Colonel Dalrymple then signified, that as the Twenty-ninth regiment had originally been designed to be placed at the castle, and was now peculiarly obnoxious to the town, he was content that it should be removed to the castle until the general's pleasure should be known.

The committee was informed of this offer, and the Lieutenant-Governor rose from council, intending to receive no further application upon this subject; but the council prayed that he would meet them again in the afternoon, and Colonel Dalrymple desiring it also, he complied.

Before the council met again, it had been intimated to them, that the "desire" of the Governor and council to the commanding officer to remove the troops would cause him to do it, though he should receive no authoritative "order." As soon as they met, a committee from the town meeting attended with a second message, to acquaint the Lieutenant-Governor that it was the unanimous voice of the people assembled, consisting as they said, of near three thousand persons, that nothing less than a total and immediate removal of the troops would satisfy them.* Ultimately the scruples of the Lieutenant-Governor were overcome, and he expressed his desire that the troops should be wholly withdrawn from the town to the castle, which was accordingly done. The funeral of the victims was attended with extraordinary pomp. Most of the shops were closed, all the bells of the town tolled on the occasion, and the corpses were followed to the grave by an immense concourse of people, arranged six abreast, the procession

* Hutchison, pp. 272–275.

being closed by a long train of carriages belonging to the principal gentry of the town.* Captain Preston and the party of soldiers were afterward tried. The captain and six of the men were acquitted, and two were brought in guilty of manslaughter; a result which reflected great honor on John Adams and Josiah Quincy, the counsel for prisoners, and on the jury.†

The General Court met in March (1770), soon after the affair of the Boston massacre. Hutchinson had appointed Cambridge as the place of meeting, and a great part of the session, which lasted till November, was consumed in altercations between him and the members in discussions on the constitutionality of his changing the place where the session was to be held. At length the General Court closed its session by prorogation, after having resolved, among other things, to promote industry and frugality, and to encourage the use of domestic manufactures throughout the province; and having appointed a committee of correspondence to communicate with the agents of Great Britain, and with the committees of the Colonies. The first of these resolutions of the Massachusetts Assembly, namely, to discourage the use of foreign articles, had been adopted in consequence of a determination of the merchants of Boston, made during the present session, by which they agreed to alter their nonimportation agreement, and to adopt the plan, which had been for some time followed in New York and in Philadelphia, of importing all the usual articles of trade except tea, which it was unanimously agreed should not be brought into the country unless it could be smuggled.

The same month that witnessed the close of this session of the Massachusetts General Court was marked by the

* Gordon's "History," vol. I, p. 290.

† Quincy's "Life of Josiah Quincy," pp. 31–66.

decease of the celebrated George Grenville, who had made himself so conspicuous as the originator of the Stamp Act.

Lord Botetourt, Governor of Virginia, also died in the autumn of this year (October 15). The close of his administration was darkened by events which gave him great uneasiness. The Virginians, who had received with so much gratification the announcement made through him of the good intentions of the ministry toward the Colonists, were deeply disgusted with the partial repeal of the revenue laws, and loudly expressed their discontent. Lord Botetourt, conceiving himself to have been deceived by the ministry, demanded his discharge; but before its arrival, he fell sick of a bilious fever which soon terminated his life. The statue erected to his memory by order of the House of Burgesses, is still standing at Williamsburg.

Note.— Francis Bernard, Governor of Massachusetts, frequently mentioned in this chapter, was the Governor of New Jersey after Governor Belcher, in 1758. He succeeded Governor Pownall, of Massachusetts, in 1760. He governed the province for nine years, during one of the most interesting periods of American history. The first part of his administration was very agreeable to the General Court, and much harmony prevailed for two or three years.

Two parties had long existed in the province, the advocates of the crown, and the defenders of the rights of the people. Governor Bernard was soon classed with those who were desirous of strengthening the royal authority in America; the Sons of Liberty therefore uniformly opposed him. His indiscretion in appointing Mr. Hutchison chief justice, instead of giving that office to Colonel Otis, of Barnstable, to whom it had been promised by Shirley, proved very injurious to him. In consequence of this appointment he lost the influence of Colonel Otis, and by yielding himself to Mr. Hutchison, drew upon himself the hostility of James Otis, the son, a man of great talents, who soon became the leader on the popular side.

The causes which finally brought on the American Revolution

were then operating. Governor Bernard possessed no talent for conciliation; he endeavored to accomplish ministerial purposes by force; and the spirit of freedom gained strength from the open manner in which he attempted to crush it. He was the principal means of bringing the troops to Boston, that he might overawe the people; and it was owing to him that they were retained in the town. He endeavored to obtain an alteration of the charter, in order to transfer the right of electing the council from the General Court to the crown.

This attempt, though it drew upon him the indignation of the province, was so pleasing to the ministry that he was created a baronet in 1769. One of his last public measures was the proroguing of the General Court, in consequence of their refusing to make provision for the support of the troops. It was found necessary to recall him. He died in England in June, 1779.

CHAPTER VII.

WASHINGTON VISITS THE WESTERN COUNTRY.

1770.

IN the autumn of 1770, Washington made a tour in the western country which lasted nine weeks (October 5, to December). His immediate object was to inspect certain lands which had been designated to be granted to the officers and soldiers of Virginia, who had served in the French War.

An order of council of the 18th of February, 1754, followed by a proclamation of Governor Dinwiddie, promising some 200,000 acres of what we now call military bounty lands, had its effect in inducing the enlistment of soldiers who had subsequently "behaved so much to the satisfaction of the country, as to be honored with the most public acknowledgments of it by the Assembly."* The claims of the officers and soldiers to these lands had long been resisted by the British ministry and the authorities in Virginia; and were now threatened with defeat by a proposed grant of land to a Mr. Walpole (a British banker) and others, which would have comprehended at least four-fifths of this very land, properly belonging to the officers and soldiers, for the purchase and survey of which the government had recently voted £2,500 sterling.†

*Washington's letter to Lord Botetourt, April 15, 1770. See Sparks, "Writings of Washington," vol. II, p. 358.

† Washington's letter to Lord Botetourt, April 15, 1770. See Sparks, "Writings of Washington," vol. II, p. 357.

Washington had used great exertions, and spent a large sum of money in urging these claims. He had set forth their justice and equity in a correspondence with Lord Botetourt, whose intercession with the ministry he strongly solicited; and at a subsequent period (June 15, 1771), it formed the subject of a letter to Lord Dunmore, in which he requests to be informed respecting the truth of a report that the "Walpole Grant" had actually been made.

Washington's exertions in this good cause were crowned with success, and every officer and soldier received his proper share of the land. "Even Vanbraam," says Mr. Sparks,* "who was believed to have deceived him at the Great Meadows, and who went as a hostage to Canada, thence to England, and never returned to America, was not forgotten in the distribution. His share was reserved, and he was informed that it was at his disposal."

It was while this affair was in progress, that Washington made his tour to the West for the purpose of inspecting the bounty lands, and selecting for the surveys such tracts as were really valuable. It was one of those disinterested and public spirited actions, which abound throughout his whole career.

In this tour he was accompanied by his friend and physician, Dr. Craik, who had been with him in Braddock's expedition. They were attended by three negro servants, and the whole party was mounted. They set out on the 5th of October (1770), and in twelve days arrived at Fort Pitt (old Fort Duquesne). The following extract from Washington's journal of the tour informs us how the party were entertained at Fort Pitt, and in its neighborhood during their stay, by the officers of the garrison and Wash-

* "Life of Washington."

ington's old acquaintance, George Croghan, now Colonel Croghan, deputy agent to Sir William Johnson:*

"October 17th. Dr. Craik and myself, with Captain Crawford and others, arrived at Fort Pitt, distant from the Crossing, forty-three and a half measured miles. In riding this distance we passed over a great deal of exceedingly fine land, chiefly white oak, especially from Sewickly Creek to Turtle Creek; but the whole broken, resembling as I think all the lands in this country do, the Loudoun lands. We lodged in what is called the town, distant about 300 yards from the fort, at one Mr. Semple's, who keeps a very good house of public entertainment. The houses, which are built of logs and ranged in streets, are on the Monongahela, and I suppose may be about twenty in number, and inhabited by Indian traders. The fort is built on the point between the rivers Alleghany and Monongahela, but not so near the pitch of it as Fort Duquesne stood. It is five-sided and regular, two of which, near the land, are of brick; the others stockade. A moat encompasses it. The garrison consists of two companies of Royal Irish, commanded by Captain Edmondson.

"18th. Dined in the fort with Colonel Croghan and the officers of the garrison; supped there also, meeting with great civility from the gentlemen, and engaged to dine with Colonel Croghan the next day at his seat, about four miles up the Alleghany.

"19th. Received a message from Colonel Croghan, that the White Mingo and other chiefs of the Six Nations had something to say to me, and desiring that I would be at his house about 11, where they were to meet. I went up and received a speech, with a string of wampum, from the White Mingo to the following effect:

* The "Journal" is given in Sparks, "Writings of Washington," vol. II, p. 516.

"'That as I was a person whom some of them remember to have seen when I was sent on an embassy to the French, and most of them had heard of, they were come to bid me welcome to this country, and to desire that the people of Virginia would consider them as friends and brothers, linked together in one chain; that I would inform the Governor, that it was their wish to live in peace and harmony with the white people, and that though there had been some unhappy differences between them and the people upon our frontiers, they were all made up, and they hoped forgotten; and concluded with saying, that their brothers of Virginia did not come among them and trade as the inhabitants of the other provinces did, from whence they were afraid that we did not look upon them with so friendly an eye as they could wish.'

"To this I answered, after thanking them for their friendly welcome, 'that all the injuries and affronts that had passed on either side were now totally forgotten, and that I was sure nothing was more wished and desired by the people of Virginia, than to live in the strictest friendship with them; that the Virginians were a people not so much engaged in trade as the Pennsylvanians, which was the reason of their not being so frequently among them; but that it was possible they might, for the time to come, have stricter connections with them, and that I would acquaint the government with their desires.'

'After dining at Colonel Croghan's we returned to Pittsburg, Colonel Croghan with us, who intended to accompany us part of the way down the river, having engaged an Indian called The Pheasant, and one Joseph Nicholson, an interpreter, to attend us the whole voyage; also a young Indian warrior."

The party were now obliged to leave their horses, and descend the Ohio some 265 miles to the Great Kenhawa.

This part of the journey was through a perfect wilderness. There were no settlers on the Ohio river below Pittsburg. The Indians were sole possessors of the country. A few adventurers in search of lands had been the only visitors to what is now one of the most cultivated, rich, and beautiful regions in the United States.

As they proceeded down the river in a large open canoe, entirely unprotected from the inclemency of the autumn weather, they were under the necessity of landing every night, and encamping in the woods. Occasionally they left the canoe in the daytime, for the purpose of examining the lands or for hunting. This thickly wooded region at that early time abounded in choice game. Deer, buffaloes, wild turkeys, ducks, and geese were found in plenty; and Washington, who delighted in hunting, had ample opportunities for enjoying his favorite recreation.

The first two days of the voyage down the river are thus noticed in the journal:

"October 20th (1770). We embarked in a large canoe, with sufficient store of provision and necessaries, and the following persons, besides Dr. Craik and myself, to wit, Captain Crawford, Joseph Nicholson, Robert Bell, William Harrison, Charles Morgan, and Daniel Rendon, a boy of Captain Crawford's, and the Indians, who were in a canoe by themselves. From Fort Pitt we sent our horses and boys back to Captain Crawford's, with orders to meet us there again on the 14th day of November. Colonel Croghan, Lieutenant Hamilton, and Mr. Magee set out with us. At 2 we dined at Mr. Magee's, and encamped ten miles below, and four above Logstown. We passed several large islands which appeared to be very good, as the bottoms also did on each side of the river alternately; the hills on one side being opposite to the bottoms on

the other, which seemed generally to be about three or four hundred yards wide, and so *vice versa.*

"21st. Left our encampment about 6 o'clock and breakfasted at Logstown, where we parted with Colonel Croghan and company about 9 o'clock. At 11 we came to the mouth of the Big Beaver creek, opposite to which is a good situation for a house, and above it on the same side, that is, the west, there appears to be a body of fine land. About five miles lower down, on the east side, comes in Raccoon creek, at the mouth of which and up it appears to be a body of good land also. All the land between this creek and the Monongahela and for fifteen miles back is claimed by Colonel Croghan under a purchase from the Indians, which sale, he says, is confirmed by His Majesty. On this creek, where the branches thereof interlock with the water of Shurtees creek, there is, according to Colonel Croghan's account, a body of fine, rich, level land. This tract he wants to sell, and offers it at £5 sterling per hundred acres, with an exemption of quit-rents for twenty years; after which, to be subject to the payment of 4s. and £2 sterling per hundred acres; provided he can sell it in ten-thousand-acre lots. At present the unsettled state of this country renders any purchase dangerous. From Racoon creek to Little Beaver creek appears to me to be little short of ten miles, and about three miles below this we encamped, after hiding a barrel of biscuit in an island to lighten our canoe."

In these extracts from the journal, as well as in those that follow, it will be observed that Washington does not forget the main object of the tour, the selection, namely, of good lands for the soldiers of the Seven Years' War. His usual prudence is apparent in the remark on Croghan's offer of an opportunity for speculating in land. Washington was by no means averse however to invest-

ing his money in wild lands; and he subsequently, as we shall have occasion to remark, bought large tracts and became interested in companies whose object it was to form settlements in the rich and beautiful region which he was now visiting.

The next extract from the journal refers to the dangers, but the writer does not complain, as travelers generally do, of the discomforts and hardships of the voyage. It also gives us a glimpse of the Indians and a specimen of the hunting excursions of the voyagers. It also refers to an alarm of Indian hostility, which happily proved groundless:

"October 22d. As it began to snow about midnight and continued pretty steadily, it was about 7:30 before we left our encampment. At the distance of about eight miles we came to the mouth of Yellow creek, opposite to, or rather, below which, appears to be a long bottom of very good land, and the ascent to the hills apparently gradual. There is another pretty large bottom of very good land about two or three miles above this. About eleven or twelve miles from this, and just above what is called the Long Island (which, though so distinguished, is not very remarkable for length, breadth, or goodness), comes in on the east side of the river a small creek or run, the name of which I could not learn; and a mile or two below the island, on the west side, comes in Big Stony creek (not larger in appearance than the other), on neither of which does there seem to be any large bottoms or bodies of good land. About seven miles from the last-mentioned creek, twenty-eight from our last encampment, and about seventy-five from Pittsburg, we came to the Mingo town, situate on the west side of the river, a little above the Cross creeks. This place contains about twenty cabins and seventy inhabitants of the Six Nations. Had

we set off early and kept constantly at it we might have reached lower than this place to-day, as the water in many places ran pretty swift, in general more so than yesterday. The river from Fort Pitt to Logstown has some ugly rifts and shoals, which we found somewhat difficult to pass, whether from our inexperience of the channel or not I cannot undertake to say. From Logstown to the mouth of Little Beaver creek is much the same kind of water; that is, rapid in some places, gliding gently along in others, and quite still in many. The water from Little Beaver creek to the Mingo town in general is swifter than we found it the preceding day, and without any shallows; there being some one part or another always deep, which is a natural consequence, as the river in all the distance from Fort Pitt to this town has not widened at all, nor do the bottoms appear to be any larger. The hills which come close to the river opposite to each bottom are steep, and on the side in view, in many places rocky and cragged, but said to abound in good land on the tops. These are not a range of hills, but broken and cut in two, as if there were frequent watercourses running through, which however we did not perceive to be the case. The river abounds in wild geese and several kinds of ducks, but in no great quantity. We killed five wild turkeys today. Upon our arrival at the Mingo town we received the disagreeable news of two traders being killed at a town called the Grape-Vine town, thirty-eight miles below this, which caused us to hesitate whether we should proceed or wait for further intelligence."

The sequel of this affair is thus noticed in the record of events on the 24th and 25th of October:

"Two or three miles below the Pipe creek is a pretty large creek on the west side, called by Nicholson, Fox-Grape Vine, by others Captema, creek, on which, eight

miles up, is the town called the Grape-Vine town; and at the mouth of it is the place where it is said the trader was killed. To this place we came about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and finding nobody there we agreed to encamp, that Nicholson and one of the Indians might go up to the town and inquire into the truth of the report concerning the murder.

"25th. About 7 o'clock Nicholson and the Indian returned; they found nobody at the town but two old Indian women (the men being a hunting); from these they learned that the trader was not murdered, but drowned in attempting to cross the Ohio; and that only one boy, belonging to the traders, was in these parts; the trader, his father, being gone for horses to take home their skins. About half an hour after 7 we set out from our encampment, around which and up the creek is a body of fine land. In our passage down to this place we saw innumerable quantities of turkeys, and many deer watering and browsing on the shore side, some of which we killed."

On the next day, near Long Reach, the party encountered traders, from whom they learn more particulars about the false alarm:

"At the end of this reach we found Martin and Lindsay, two traders, and from them learnt that the person drowned was one Philips, attempting, in company with Rogers, another Indian trader, to swim the river with their horses at an improper place; Rogers himself narrowly escaping."

In the following record of the proceedings on the 28th of October, we find an exquisite picture of Indian life and manners:

"28th. Left our encampment about 7 o'clock. Two miles below, a small run comes in on the east side, through a piece of land that has a very good appearance, the bottom beginning above our encampment and continuing in

appearance wide for four miles down, where we found Kiashuta and his hunting party encamped. Here we were under the necessity of paying our compliments, as this person was one of the Six Nation chiefs, and the head of those upon this river. In the person of Kiashuta I found an old acquaintance, he being one of the Indians that went with me to the French in 1753. He expressed a satisfaction at seeing me, and treated us with great kindness, giving us a quarter of very fine buffalo. He insisted upon our spending that night with him, and, in order to retard us as little as possible, moved his camp down the river just below the mouth of a creek, the name of which I could not learn. At this place we all encamped. After much counseling over night, they all came to my fire the next morning with great formality, when Kiashuta, rehearsing what had passed between me and the sachems at Colonel Croghan's, thanked me for saying that peace and friendship with them were the wish of the people of Virginia, and for recommending it to the traders to deal with them upon a fair and equitable footing; and then again expressed their desire of having a trade opened with Virginia, and that the Governor thereof might not only be made acquainted therewith, but with their friendly disposition toward the white people. This I promised to do.

"29th. The tedious ceremony which the Indians observe in their counselings and speeches detained us till 9 o'clock."

In the following record of the 31st of October, and the two following days, we find the travelers at the farthest point they had proposed to visit, the Great Kenhawa river:

"31st. I sent the canoe down about five miles to the junction of the two rivers, that is, the Kenhawa with the

Ohio, and set out upon a hunting party to view the land. We steered nearly east for about eight or nine miles, then bore southwardly and westwardly till we came to our camp at the confluence of the rivers. The land from the rivers appeared but indifferent and very broken; whether these ridges may not be those that divide the waters of the Ohio from the Kenhawa is not certain, but I believe they are; if so, the lands may yet be good; if not, that which lies beyond the river bottoms is worth little.

"November 1st (1770). Before 8 o'clock we set off with our canoe up the river, to discover what kind of lands lay upon the Kenhawa. The land on both sides this river, just at the mouth, is very fine, but on the east side, when you get toward the hills, which I judge to be about 600 or 700 yards from the river, it appears to be wet, and better adapted for meadow than tillage. This bottom continues up the east side for about two miles; and by going up the Ohio a good tract might be got of bottom land, including the old Shawnee town, which is about three miles up the Ohio, just above the mouth of a creek. We judged we went up the Kenhawa about ten miles to-day. On the east side appear to be some good bottoms, but small, neither long nor wide, and the hills back of them rather steep and poor.

"2d. We proceeded up the river with the canoe about four miles farther, and then encamped and went a hunting; killed five buffaloes and wounded some others, three deer, etc. This country abounds in buffaloes and wild game of all kinds, as also in all kinds of wild fowl, there being in the bottoms a great many small, grassy ponds or lakes, which are full of swans, geese, and ducks of different kinds."

The following notice of the first day on the return voy-

age is exceedingly characteristic of Washington's methodical and business-like habits:

"3d. We set off down the river on our return homeward and encamped at the mouth. At the beginning of the bottom above the junction of the rivers, and at the mouth of a branch on the east side, I marked two maples, an elm, and hoop-wood tree as a corner of the soldiers' land (if we can get it), intending to take all the bottom from hence to the rapids in the Great Bend into one survey. I also marked at the mouth of another run lower down on the west side, at the lower end of the long bottom, an ash and hoop-wood for the beginning of another of the soldiers' survey, to extend up so as to include all the bottom in a body on the west side. In coming from our last encampment up the Kenhawa, I endeavored to take the courses and distances of the river by a pocket-compass and by guessing."

In the following memorandum Kiashuta again comes upon the stage:

"6th. We left our encampment a little after daylight, and after about five miles we came to Kiashuta's hunting camp, which was now removed to the mouth of that creek, noted October 29th for having fallen timber at the mouth of it, in a bottom of good land. By kindness and idle ceremony of the Indians, I was detained at Kiashuta's camp all the remaining part of this day."

From Kiashuta, Washington, on this occasion, obtained much valuable information respecting the topography of that part of the neighboring country which he had not seen; and this information is entered in detail on the journal evidently for future reference. The portion of the journal from the 9th to the 17th of November was so much injured by an accident that it could not be transcribed for publication; but the record for the 17th, the

day of their arrival at Mingo town, contains an extended notice of the rivers and lands the party had visited, as well as of the Indians and their disposition toward land speculators and squatters, who had already commenced operations on the land lying between the Ohio river and the recognized boundary of Virginia.

At Mingo town the party brought their boating excursion to an end. On the 18th of November, Washington agreed with two Delaware Indians to take the canoe up to Fort Pitt, and on the 20th, their horses having been brought to them, the party set forward for Fort Pitt, where they arrived the next day.

The record of the 22d mentions Dr. Connolly, afterward distinguished in the history of the western country as a large operator in lands and in colonization. The reader will notice that in this and several previous extracts Pittsburg is mentioned; this name, it seems, being already given to the little cluster of log cabins just commenced near the site of Fort Pitt (old Fort Duquesne):

"22d. Stayed at Pittsburg all day. Invited the officers and some other gentlemen to dinner with me at Semple's, among whom was one Dr. Connolly, nephew to Colonel Croghan, a very sensible, intelligent man, who had traveled over a good deal of this western country both by land and water, and who confirms Nicholson's account of the good land on the Shawnee river, up which he had been near 400 miles. This country (I mean on the Shawnee river), according to Dr. Connolly's description, must be exceedingly desirable on many accounts. The climate is fine, the soil remarkably good, the lands well watered with good streams, and level enough for any kind of cultivation. Besides these advantages from nature, it has others not less important to a new settlement, particularly game, which is so plentiful as to render the trans-

portation of provisions thither, bread only excepted, altogether unnecessary. Dr. Connolly is so much delighted with the lands and climate on that river that he wishes for nothing more than to induce 100 families to go there and live, that he might be among them. A new and most desirable government might be established there, to be bounded, according to his account, by the Ohio northward and westward, by the ridge that divides the waters of the Tennessee or Cherokee river southward and westward, and a line to be run from the Falls of the Ohio, or above, so as to cross the Shawnee river above the fork of it. Dr. Connolly gives much the same account of the land between Fort Chartres, in the Illinois country, and Post St. Vincent that Nicholson does, except in the article of water, which the doctor says is bad and in the summer scarce, there being little else than stagnant water to be met with."

On the 23d of November (1770), Washington set out on his return to Mount Vernon, which he reached on the 1st of December, after an absence of nine weeks and one day. The journal of his tour, from which we have made such copious extracts, shows the laborious and fatiguing nature of traveling in the wilderness; but it was also attended with a species of danger still more formidable than any which he actually encountered. This was the hostility of the Indians, who had recently been engaged in war with the British colonists, and who, soon after this tour of Washington, again attacked them, and a bloody war ensued, of which the principal battle took place on the banks of the Great Kenhawa, which had so recently been visited by Washington and his party.

Washington intended to make another tour to the West shortly after his return, in company with Lord Dunmore, Governor of Virginia, successor to Lord Botetourt. But

he was prevented by severe domestic affliction from fulfilling his purpose. This was occasioned by the death of Miss Custis, the only daughter of Mrs. Washington.

"The long, severe, and fatal illness of Mrs. Washington's daughter," says Mrs. Kirkland,* "was the darkest cloud that overspread Mount Vernon for many years of quiet time. The feeble child was the darling of her mother; and her prolonged suffering made large drafts, not only upon the tender mother, but upon the kind stepfather; and when at length she died, Washington, who was just setting out upon a long journey of exploration, preparatory to the purchase of some tracts of land at the West, gave up the expedition and staid at home to comfort and cheer his wife under her great affliction. Mrs. Lewis, granddaughter of Mrs. Washington, says that on the occasion of this young lady's death, Washington exhibited a passionate excess of feeling — falling on his knees at the bedside and praying aloud and with tears that she might be spared, unconscious that, even as he spoke, life had departed. We find by his diary after this time that he took Mrs. Washington out every day, driving about the neighborhood and calling on intimate friends, endeavoring by exercise in the open air and by the society of those she loved to turn her thoughts from the too constant contemplation of her loss. She was a woman of strong affections, very quiet and retiring in her habits, and devoted to her family; and Washington's sympathy was never wanting when she suffered from loss or separation."

*"Memoirs of Washington," p. 202.

CHAPTER VIII.

POLITICAL UNION OF THE COLONIES.

1771–1773.

IN March, 1771, Hutchinson received his commission as Governor of Massachusetts. It was unfortunate for his character that he accepted it, as it was destined to bring him nothing but disappointment and disgrace; but his maladministration was ultimately serviceable to the Colonies, as it undoubtedly served to hasten the period of open hostilities and of consequent independence. One of the first incidents which followed his appointment was the announcement of a fresh attack on the chartered rights of the Colony by the ministry.

He had enjoyed his commission as Governor but a very short time when he acquainted the provincial Assembly that he no longer required a salary from them, as the King had made provision for his support. By this measure the British court expected gradually to introduce into practical operation the principle for which it had already contended, of rendering the emoluments, as well as the communication and endurance, of executive functions in America wholly dependent on the pleasure of the Crown; and probably it was supposed that the Americans would give little heed to the principle of an innovation of which the first practical effect was to relieve them from a considerable burden.

But the Americans valued liberty more than money,

and justly accounted it the political basis on which reposed the stability of every temporal advantage. Hutchinson's communication was deliberately examined and discussed, and a month afterward (July 10, 1771), the Assembly, by a message, declared to him that the royal provision for his support and his own acceptance of it was an infraction of the rights of the inhabitants recognized by the provincial charter, an insult to the Assembly, and an invasion of the important trust which from the foundation of their Commonwealth they had ever continued to exercise.

Hutchinson, who, like many scholars, entertained sentiments rather kindly than respectful of the mass of mankind, and never justly appreciated the fortitude, resolution, and foresight of his countrymen, appears to have been struck with surprise at their conduct on this occasion. This, at least, is the most intelligible explanation of his behavior, when, some time after, they desired his assent to the usual provision they made for the salaries of the judges. Instead of frankly granting or withholding his sanction, he continued to hesitate and temporize, until a remonstrance from the Assembly elicited from him the avowal, for which they were quite prepared, that he could no longer authorize a provincial provision for the judges, as the King had undertaken to provide for their remuneration also.

The Assembly instantly passed a resolution declaring that this measure tended to the subversion of justice and equity; and that, while the tenure of judicial office continued to depend on the pleasure of the King, "any of the judges who shall accept of and depend upon the pleasure of the Crown for his support, independent of the grants of the Assembly, will discover that he is an enemy

to the Constitution, and has it in his heart to promote the establishment of arbitrary power in the province."

We shall here so far overstep the march of time and order of events as to notice the issue of this particular dispute, which did not occur till the commencement of the year 1774, when four of the judges acquainted the Assembly that they had received the salary voted to them by the representatives of the people, and refused to accept emolument from any other quarter; but Oliver, the Chief Justice, announced that he had received the King's salary, and without His Majesty's permission could not accept any other emolument. The Assembly thereupon tendered an impeachment against Oliver to the Governor and council, and as Hutchinson refused to receive it, they protested that his refusal was occasioned by his own dependence on the Crown. They had never indeed any hope that it would be received, and were incited to these measures by the desire of rendering Hutchinson and Oliver additionally unpopular.

In the close of the present year (1772), Samuel Adams suggested to his countrymen the expediency of a measure fitted to counteract the representations of Hutchinson and his adherents, who gave out that the popular opposition was more formidable in appearance than in reality and was at bottom merely an intrigue of a few factious men; and in conformity with his suggestion, the inhabitants of Boston (November 22, 1772) elected twenty-one of their fellow-citizens as a committee empowered to correspond with the rest of the inhabitants of the province, to consider and represent the common grievances, and to publish to the world an account of their transactions. The committee thus elected prepared and dispersed throughout the province a report of all the encroachments that had been attempted or committed upon American

liberty, together with a circular letter which concluded in these terms: "Let us consider, brethren, that we are struggling for our best birthright and inheritance, of which the infringement renders all other blessings precarious in their enjoyment and consequently trifling in their value. We are not afraid of poverty, but we disdain slavery. Let us disappoint the men who are raising themselves on the ruin of this country. Let us convince every invader of our freedom that we will be as free as the Constitution which our fathers recognized will justify."

The powerful influence of this measure was not confined to the province of Massachusetts, nor even to the States of New England. It will be seen in the sequel that it was adopted by all the Colonies.

The following extract, from a British writer, evinces how well the importance of Samuel Adams's invention of committees of correspondence was understood in England, where it was attributed to their "favorite aversion," Dr. Franklin:

"The Americans declared that the design of the British Government was to impose its own arbitrary instruments upon them, to destroy the very essence of their charters and liberties, by making the judges and governors wholly independent of the people, and wholly dependent upon the Crown. A series of protests, begun at Boston, where the Assembly of Massachusetts had returned to sit, soon ran through all the Colonies; and a general corresponding committee was established, with branches and ramifications reaching to nearly every town and village in the Colonies. This committee of correspondence proved the great lever of revolution. The invention of it has been attributed to Franklin, but the thing itself, the uses to which it might be applied, and its absolute necessity in a country where the population was scattered over such im-

mense tracts of land, with mighty rivers and forests, mountains and deserts intervening, were all so obvious that they must have struck the dullest apprehension, and the idea no doubt sprung up spontaneously in thousands of minds at once. The effect was soon seen in a general combination of measures, a unanimity of language, and a general avoidance or persecution of all who presumed to side with the British Government. The words and deeds of an individual at Boston were made known everywhere, and the Tories, as they were called, could not travel or show their faces anywhere without being reviled and threatened as enemies to their country. Liberty has its arbitrary devices as well as despotism. Description of persons, like the *signalemens* on a French passport, were scattered far and wide, so that the traveling Tories found themselves recognized even where they least expected to be known."

During the month (October, 1770) before Washington commenced his journey to the western country another important change had taken place in the measures adopted by the British ministry for reducing the people of Massachusetts to obedience. While the General Court were in session for the third time at Cambridge, the Lieutenant-Governor (Hutchinson) had received an order which had been adopted by the King in council,* making the harbor of Boston the rendezvous of all ships stationed in North America, and the fortress (Castle William), which commanded it, was to be delivered up to such officer as General Gage† should appoint, to be garrisoned by regular troops and put into a respectable state of defense. Gage directed Hutchinson to deliver up Castle William to Colonel Dalrymple.

* Bancroft, "History of the United States," vol. VI, p. 369.

† Commander-in-Chief of the royal forces in America; at this time he was in England.

This command of the King, Hutchinson, after one day's hesitation, carried into effect by a sort of stratagem, thus violating the charter of Massachusetts, which confided the military force of the Colony and its forts to the Governor alone. The civil power was thus brought into subjection to the military, and "the act," says Bancroft, "was a commencement of civil war."

No attempt was made by the Bostonians to displace the royal troops. The people understood the menace, but "bided their time." The General Court protested; and then proceeded to institute an inquiry into the state of the province, with a view to the redress of grievances. Hutchinson, in the meantime, was secretly urging Lord Hillsborough the complete subversion of the charter of Massachusetts and the remodeling of its government on the principles of despotism.

In June, 1772, Hutchinson, for the fourth time, ordered the General Court to assemble in Cambridge. He persisted in this course, so vexatious to the members, merely as an assertion of prerogative, and it was precisely on this ground that the Legislature remonstrated against being exiled from the proper seat of government for the province. Weary of the contest, he now put an end to discussion by adjourning the session to Boston.

Soon after, the famous affair of the schooner Gaspee took place. This vessel was commanded by Lieutenant Dudingston, who was loudly complained of by the people of Providence, R. I., for obstructing the commerce of the place without having shown any evidence of his authority. Chief Justice Hopkins pronounced this conduct a trespass, if not piracy; but he was sustained by the admiral, who threatened those persons who should rescue a vessel from any of the King's officers with being hung as pirates. Thus supported, Dudingston "insulted the in-

habitants, plundered the island of sheep and hogs, cut down trees, fired at market boats, detained vessels without a colorable pretext, and made illegal seizures of goods, of which the recovery cost more than they were worth."*

On the 9th of June (1772), the Providence packet was sailing into the harbor of Newport, and Lieutenant Dudingston thought proper to require the captain to lower his colors. This the captain of the packet deemed repugnant to his patriotic feelings, and the Gaspee fired at the packet to bring her to; the American however still persisted in holding on her course, and, by keeping in shoal water, dexterously contrived to run the schooner aground in the chase.

As the tide was upon the ebb, the Gaspee was set fast for the night, and afforded a tempting opportunity for retaliation; and a party of men led by John Brown and Joseph Brown, of Providence, and Simeon Potter, of Bristol, being determined to rid themselves of so uncivil an inspector, in the middle of the night manned several boats and boarded the Gaspee. The lieutenant was wounded in the affray, but, with everything belonging to him, he was carefully conveyed on shore, as were all his crew. The vessel, with her stores, was then burnt, and the party returned unmolested to their homes. When the Governor became acquainted with this event, he offered a reward of £500 for the discovery of the offenders, and the royal pardon to those who would confess their guilt. Commissioners were appointed also to investigate the offense and bring the perpetrators to justice; but, after remaining some time in session, they reported that they could obtain no evidence, and thus the affair terminated; a circumstance which forcibly illustrates the inviolable brother-

* Bancroft, " History of the United States," vol. VI, p. 413.

hood which then united the people against the government.

Governor Hutchinson was anxious to have the persons concerned in the destruction of the Gaspee sent to England for trial and hung at Execution Dock, under an act recently passed for the protection of the King's dockyards, ships, and stores; and Lord Sandwich wished to have the charter of Rhode Island revoked.

Meantime the General Court were examining the subject of the recent attacks on the charter, in the provision for rendering civil officers independent of the people by making them dependent on the Crown for their salaries. The House declared "that the innovation was an important change in the Constitution, and exposed the province to a despotic administration of the government."

Lord Hillsborough, who had been greatly influenced in his despotic measures against the Colonies by the letter of Hutchinson, resigned his office of Secretary for the Colonies, and was succeeded by Lord Dartmouth,* an amiable and candid man, sincerely desirous of conciliation and peace, but like the other members of the British ministry, by no means well informed on the actual condition of the Colonies, and the real disposition of the people.

A personal animosity between Governor Hutchinson and some distinguished patriots in Massachusetts contributed to perpetuate a flame of discontent in that province, after it had elsewhere visibly abated. This was worked up in the year 1773, to a high pitch by a singular combination of circumstances. Some letters had been written in the course of the dispute by Governor Hutchinson, Lieutenant-Governor Oliver, and others in Boston, to persons in power and office in England, which contained a very unfavorable representation of the state of public

* Bancroft, "History of the United States."

affairs, and tended to show the necessity of coercive measures, and of changing the chartered system of government, to secure the obedience of the province. These letters fell into the hands of Dr. Franklin, agent of the province, who transmitted them to Boston. The indignation and animosity which was excited on the receipt of them knew no bounds. The House of Assembly agreed on a petition and remonstrance to His Majesty, in which they charged their Governor and Lieutenant-Governor with being betrayers of their trusts, and of the people they governed, and of giving private, partial, and false information. They also declared them enemies to the Colonies, and prayed for justice against them, and for their speedy removal from their places. These charges were carried through by a majority of eighty-two to twelve.

This petition and remonstrance being transmitted to England, the merits of it were discussed before His Majesty's privy council. After a hearing before that board, in which Dr. Franklin represented the province of Massachusetts, the Governor and Lieutenant-Governor were acquitted. Mr. Wedderburne, who defended the accused royal servants, in the course of his pleadings, inveighed against Dr. Franklin in the severest language, as the fomenter of the disputes between the two countries. It was no protection to this venerable sage, that being the agent of Massachusetts, he conceived it his duty to inform his constituents of letters, written on public affairs, calculated to overturn their chartered Constitution. The age, respectability, and high literary character of the subject of Mr. Wedderburne's philippic, turned the attention of the public on the transaction. The insult offered to one of their public agents, and especially to one who was both the idol and ornament of his native country, sunk

THE DEATH WARRANT OF MAJOR ANDRE.

He placed his hat on the table and cheerfully said, "I am ready at any moment."

deep in the minds of the Americans. That a faithful servant, whom they loved and almost adored, should be insulted for discharging his official duty rankled in their hearts. Dr. Franklin was also immediately dismissed from the office of Postmaster-General, which he held under the Crown. It was not only by his transmission of these letters that he had given offense to the British ministry, but by his popular writings in favor of America. Two pieces of his in particular had lately attracted a large share of public attention, and had an extensive influence on both sides of the Atlantic. The one purported to be an edict from the King of Prussia, for taxing the inhabitants of Great Britain, as descendants of emigrants from his dominions; the other was entitled: "Rules for reducing a great empire to a small one," in both of which he had exposed the claims of the mother country, and the proceedings of the British ministry, with the severity of poignant satire.

The system of committees of correspondence, invented by Samuel Adams, had hitherto been confined to the towns of Massachusetts. To Virginia, the credit is due of having extended it to all the Colonies. The House of Burgesses, after being repeatedly prorogued by proclamations of the Governor, Lord Dunmore, met on the 4th of March, 1773. On the 12th of the same month, the Assembly unanimously adopted a series of resolutions, moved by Dabney Carr,* providing for the appointment of a committee of the Legislature to correspond with the Legislatures of the other Colonies, and recommending the same measure to be adopted by them, "thereby establishing channels of intelligence and a bond of union, which proved of the utmost importance to the general cause. Washing-

* Alexander H. Everett, Life of Patrick Henry, in Sparks's "American Biography," 2d series, vol. I, p. 280.

ton was present and gave his hearty support to these resolves."* They were also supported with great eloquence by Patrick Henry and Richard Henry Lee. Among the names of the Virginia committee of correspondence then appointed are those of Bland, Lee, Henry, Carr, and Jefferson.†

This measure, which produced an important effect in animating the resolution and harmonizing the proceedings of the Americans, was so grateful in particular to the citizens of Boston, that in a letter of instructions which they addressed shortly after to their representatives in the Assembly, they desired them seriously to consider if the salvation of American liberty and the restoration of friendship between America and Britain did not demand an immediate concurrence with *the wise and salutary proposal of our noble patriotic sister Colony of Virginia.*

The recommendation of the citizens of Boston was favorably received by the Assembly of Massachusetts, which instantly appointed a committee of correspondence with the other Colonies. In a circular letter published shortly after by this committee, the prospect of a quarrel between England and Spain was remarked in these terms: "Should a war take place, which by many is thought to be probable, America will be viewed by the administration as important to Great Britain. Her aid will be deemed necessary; her friendship will be courted. Would it not then be wise in the several American governments to withhold all kind of aid in a general war, till their rights and liberties are permanently restored and secured?" "With regard to the *extent of rights*," they added, "which the Colonies *ought to insist upon*, it is a subject which requires the greatest attention and deliberation. This is a strong reason why it should claim the earliest consideration of

* Sparks, "Life of Washington," p. 113.

† Bancroft, "History of the United States," vol. VI, p. 453.

every committee, that we may be prepared, when *time and circumstances* shall give to our claim the surest prospect of success. And when we consider how one great event has hurried on after another, *such a time may come sooner than we suppose.*"

Hutchinson, about this time, with a rash confidence in his own talents and an eager hope of recommending himself to the British court, undertook in his speeches to the Assembly of Massachusetts to support by argument the legislative supremacy of Parliament — a doctrine which we have seen that his own original opinions outstripped those of his countrymen in opposing. This misplaced exertion of zeal was generally disapproved, even in England, where it was remarked with displeasure that principles solemnly established by the Crown and Parliament were at once unhinged and degraded by the presumptuous argumentative patronage of a provincial Governor.

Thomas Hutchinson, who thus arraigned himself on the side of the Crown and Parliament of England, had graduated at Harvard College in 1727, and had studied law with a view to the public service.

For ten years he was a representative from Boston in the General Court, and was three times chosen speaker. In 1752 he was appointed Judge of Probate; was a member of the council from 1749 to 1766; Lieutenant-Governor from 1758 to 1771; and in 1760 was appointed Chief Justice. At one time he held the offices of Councillor, Judge of Probate, Chief Justice, and Lieutenant-Governor. By siding with the mother country in her attempts to raise a revenue from the Colonies, he became extremely obnoxious to the people. A brother-in-law of Mr. Hutchinson being appointed Distributor of Stamps, the people, or rather the mob, after compelling him to resign his office, paid a visit to Governor Hutchinson's house, in consequence of a report that he had written letters in favor of the Act; but the

chief damage done on this occasion consisted in breaking his windows. A few evenings subsequently there was a more formidable assault. The merchants being displeased with the officers of the customs and the admiralty, a mob was collected in the evening of August 26, 1765, in King street, and well supplied with strong drink. They first plundered the cellar of the Comptroller of Customs of the wine and spirits, and then proceeded with intoxicated rage to the house of Mr. Hutchinson, where splitting the doors to pieces with broad-axes, they destroyed or cast into the street everything which was in the house, retaining possession until daylight. The damage was estimated at £2,500, besides the loss of a great collection of public and private papers. He received a compensation for his losses. The Governor was that night at the castle. The citizens the next day passed a vote of censure on the rioters, but no person was punished; even six or eight persons, who were imprisoned for participation in the disturbance, were released by another mob, who by threats obtained the keys of the prison from the prison keeper. In 1768, the arrival of the troops at Boston increased the popular excitement against the Lieutenant-Governor. When Governor Bernard left the province in 1769, the administration devolved on the Lieutenant-Governor, and in the next year, the Boston massacre, as it was called, occurred, inflaming the public mind. He had a long controversy with the General Court, caused by his prorogation of it to Cambridge by order of the King. At this period, in meditating on the future, he concluded that it would be prudent for him to remain in the office of Chief Justice — and pass his days in peace. In the meantime however (March, 1771), his commission as Governor was received. Unfortunately for himself, he accepted the appointment; for from this time till his departure for England in 1774, he was in constant dispute with the Assembly and Council. The discovery of his

confidential letters to the British Government, giving details of the position of affairs in the Colony, accompanied by advice as to the measures to be pursued for coercion, caused him not a little trouble and uneasiness. The last public difficulty was the affair of the tea, a part of which had been consigned to two of his sons. At this time the Sons of Liberty, as they were called, had nullified all the powers of government. No officer dared to issue or serve a precept. February 24, 1774, the Governor informed the Legislature by message that he had obtained His Majesty's leave to return to England, and that he would soon avail himself of it; accordingly he sailed for England June 1st. After the publication of the letters in 1773, the Council and the House voted an address asking for the removal of the Governor. A hearing was had before the privy-council relative to the subject of their petition, who gave a decision in favor of "the honor, integrity, and conduct of the Governor," which indorsement of his official acts was approved by the King. He was deprived of all his offices in America, but received in lieu therefor a pension from the British Government. He died in 1780, aged 69. He published "A Brief State of the Claim of the Colonies, 1764;" "The History of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, from the First Settlement Thereof in 1628, until the year 1750," in 2 vols. 8vo., the first issued in 1760, and the second in 1767; "A Collection of Original Papers Relative to the History of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay," 8vo., 1769. These works are highly esteemed by those who are engaged in investi- Collection of Original Papers Relative to the History of the "History of Massachusetts from 1749 to 1774," was published from his manuscripts by his grandson. London, 8vo., 1828.

Thomas Gage, the last Governor of Massachusetts appointed by the King, had been Governor of Montreal in

1760, and in 1763, at the departure of Amherst from America, commissioned Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in that country. In 1774 he superseded Hutchinson as Governor of Massachusetts, and arrived at Boston, May 13th. Several regiments soon followed him, and he began to repair the fortifications on Boston Neck. As precautionary measures, he caused the powder in the arsenal at Charlestown to be seized, and sent detachments of troops to take possession of the military stores deposited in Salem or its vicinity, and others were directed to proceed to Concord. The detachment sent to Concord encountered the Americans at Lexington early in the morning of April 19, 1775, when hostilities commenced, which were renewed at Concord, and continued till the British troops reached their encampment at Charlestown, toward evening. In May, the Provincial Congress declared Gage to be an inveterate enemy of the country, disqualified to serve the Colony as Governor, and unworthy of obedience. It was his misfortune to enter upon the duties of his office at a time when it became necessary for him, as a faithful servant of his King, to execute laws framed expressly for the infliction of chastisement upon the people of the Colony over which he was placed. He possessed a naturally amiable disposition, and his benevolence often outweighed his justice in the scale of duty. Under other circumstances, his name might have been sweet in the recollection of the Americans; now it is identified with oppression and hatred of freedom. In June, he issued a proclamation, offering pardon to all the rebels, excepting Samuel Adams and John Hancock, and establishing martial law. An answer to this proclamation was prepared by Congress; but before its publication the battle of Bunker Hill put an end to the paper war. In October, 1775, he went to England, where he died in April, 1787.

CHAPTER IX.

WASHINGTON A POLITICIAN.

1773–1774.

WE have now arrived at a period when the spirited resistance of the Bostonians to the introduction of tea into the Colony of Massachusetts gave an entirely new aspect to the American controversy, and rapidly brought affairs to the crisis which they had foreseen, and for which they were prepared. To understand this in its origin, it is necessary to recur to the period when the solitary duty on tea was excepted from the partial repeal of the Revenue Act of 1767. When the duties which had been laid on glass, paper, and painters' colors were taken off, a respectable minority in Parliament contended that the duty on tea should also be removed. To this it was replied: "That as the Americans denied the legality of taxing them, a total repeal would be a virtual acquiescence in their claims; and that in order to preserve the rights of the mother country it was necessary to retain the preamble and at least one of the taxed articles." It was answered that a partial repeal would be a source of endless discontent — that the tax on tea would not defray the expenses of collecting it. The motion in favor of a total repeal was thrown out by a great majority.

As the Parliament thought fit to retain the tax on tea for an evidence of their right of taxation, the Americans in like manner, to be consistent with themselves in denying

that right, discontinued the importation of that commodity. While there was no attempt to introduce tea into the Colonies against this declared sense of the inhabitants, these opposing claims were in no danger of collision. In that case the mother country might have solaced herself with her ideal rights, and the Colonies, with their favorite opinion of a total exemption from Parliamentary taxes, without disturbing the public peace. This mode of compromising the dispute, which seemed at first designed as a salvo for the honor and consistency of both parties, was by the interference of the East India Company, in combination with the British ministry, completely overset.

The expected revenue from tea failed in consequence of the American association to import none on which a duty was charged. This, though partially violated in some of the Colonies, was well observed in others, and particularly in Pennsylvania, where the duty was never paid on more than one chest of that commodity. This proceeded as much from the spirit of gain as of patriotism. The merchants found means of supplying their countrymen with tea, smuggled from countries to which the power of Britain did not extend. They doubtless conceived themselves to be supporting the rights of their country by refusing to purchase tea from Britain, but they also reflected that if they could bring the same commodity to market free of duty, their profits would be proportionately greater.

The love of gain was not peculiar to the American merchants. From the diminished exportation to the Colonies, the warehouses of the British East India Company had in them about 17,000,000 pounds of tea, for which a market could not readily be procured. The ministry and the East India Company, unwilling to lose, the one the expected revenue from the sale of tea in America, the other their usual

commercial profits, agreed on a measure by which they supposed both would be secured.

The East India Company were by law authorized to export their tea free of duties to all places whatsoever. By this regulation, tea, though loaded with an exceptionable duty, would come cheaper to the Colonies than before it had been made a source of revenue; for the duty when taken off it, when exported from Great Britain, was greater than what was to be paid on its importation into the Colonies. Confident of success in finding a market for their tea, thus reduced in its price, and also of collecting a duty on its importation and sale in the Colonies, the East India Company freighted several ships with teas for the different Colonies, and appointed agents for the disposal thereof. This measure united several interests in opposition to its execution. The patriotism of the Americans was corroborated by several auxiliary aids, no way connected with the cause of liberty.

The merchants in England were alarmed at the losses that must accrue to themselves, from the exportations of the East India Company, and from the sales going through the hands of consignees. Letters were written from that country to colonial patriots, urging that opposition to which they of themselves were prone.

The smugglers, who were both numerous and powerful, could not relish a scheme which by underselling them, and taking a profitable branch of business out of their hands, threatened a diminution of their gains. The colonists were too suspicious of the designs of Great Britain to be imposed upon.

The cry of endangered liberty once more excited an alarm from New Hampshire to Georgia. The first opposition to the execution of the scheme adopted by the East India Company began with the American merchants.

They saw a profitable branch of their trade likely to be lost, and the benefits of it to be transferred to people in Great Britain. They felt for the wound that would be inflicted on their country's claim of exemption from Parliamentary taxation, but they felt with equal sensibility for the losses they would sustain by the diversion of the streams of commerce into unusual channels. The great body of the people, from principles of the purest patriotism, were brought over to second their wishes. They considered the whole scheme as calculated to seduce them into an acquiescence with the views of Parliament, for raising an American revenue. Much pains were taken to enlighten the colonists on this subject, and to convince them of the imminent hazard to which their liberties were exposed.

The provincial patriots insisted largely on the persevering determination of the parent State to establish her claim of taxation, by compelling the sale of tea in the Colonies against the solemn resolutions and declared sense of the inhabitants, and that at a time when the commercial intercourse of the two countries was renewed, and their ancient harmony fast returning. The proposed venders of the tea were represented as revenue officers, employed in the collection of an unconstitutional tax imposed by Great Britain. The colonists reasoned with themselves that as the duty and the price of the commodity were inseparably blended, if the tea was sold, every purchaser would pay a tax imposed by the British Parliament, as part of the purchase money. To obviate this evil, and to prevent the liberties of a great country from being sacrificed by inconsiderate purchasers, sundry town meetings were held in the capitals of the different provinces, and combinations were formed to obstruct the sales of the tea sent by the East India Company.

The resolutions entered into by the inhabitants of Phila-

delphia, on October 18, 1773, afford a good specimen of the whole. These were as follows:

"1. That the disposal of their own property is the inherent right of freemen; that there can be no property in that which another can, of right, take from us without our consent; that the claim of Parliament to tax America is, in other words, a claim of right to levy contributions on us at pleasure.

2. That the duty imposed by Parliament upon tea landed in America is a tax on the Americans, or levying contributions on them without their consent.

3. That the express purpose for which the tax is levied on the Americans — namely, for the support of government, administration of justice, and defense of His Majesty's dominions in America, has a direct tendency to render Assemblies useless, and to introduce arbitrary government and slavery.

4. That a virtuous and steady opposition to this ministerial plan of governing America, is absolutely necessary to preserve even the shadow of liberty, and is a duty which every freeman in America owes to his country, to himself, and to his posterity.

5. That the resolution lately entered into by the East India Company to send out their tea to America, subject to the payment of duties on its being landed here, is an open attempt to enforce this ministerial plan, and a violent attack upon the liberties of America.

6. That it is the duty of every American to oppose this attempt.

7. That whoever shall directly or indirectly countenance this attempt, or in any wise aid or abet in unloading, receiving, or vending the tea sent, or to be sent out by the East India Company, while it remains subject to the payment of a duty here, is an enemy to his country.

8. That a committee be immediately chosen to wait on those gentlemen, who, it is reported, are appointed by the East India Company to receive and sell said tea, and request them, from a regard to their own character and the peace and good order of the city and province, immediately to resign their appointment."

As the time approached when the arrival of the tea ships might be soon expected, such measures were adopted as seemed most likely to prevent the landing of their cargoes. The tea consignees appointed by the East India Company were, in several places, compelled to relinquish their appointments, and no others could be found hardy enough to act in their stead. The pilots in the river Delaware were warned not to conduct any of the tea ships into their harbor. In New York, popular vengeance was denounced against all who would contribute, in any measure, to forward the views of the East India Company. The captains of the New York and Philadelphia ships, being apprised of the resolution of the people, and fearing the consequences of landing a commodity, charged with an odious duty, in violation of their declared public sentiments, concluded to return directly to Great Britain, without making any entry at the custom house.

It was otherwise in Massachusetts. The tea ships designed for the supply of Boston were consigned to the sons, cousins, and particular friends of Governor Hutchinson. When they were called upon to resign, they answered "that it was out of their power." The collector refused to give a clearance, unless the vessels were discharged of dutiable articles. The Governor refused to give a pass for the vessels, unless properly qualified from the custom house. The Governor also requested Admiral Montagu to guard the passages out of the harbor, and gave orders to suffer no vessels, coasters excepted, to pass the fortress

from the town without a pass signed by himself. From a combination of these circumstances, the return of the tea vessels from Boston was rendered impossible. The inhabitants then had no option but to prevent the landing of the tea or to suffer it to be landed, and depend on the unanimity of the people not to purchase it, or to destroy the tea, or to suffer a deep-laid scheme against their sacred liberties to take effect. The first would have required incessant watching by night as well as by day for a period of time, the duration of which no one could compute. The second would have been visionary to childishness, by suspending the liberties of a growing country on the self-denial and discretion of every tea drinker in the province. They viewed the tea as the vehicle of an unconstitutional tax, and as inseparably associated with it. To avoid the one, they resolved to destroy the other.

This decision was not arrived at without considerable delay and preparation on the part of the people. Much time had already been consumed in town meetings, and conferences of the committee of correspondence in Boston with those of the neighboring towns. The first of the tea ships, the Dartmouth, owned by Rotch, a Quaker merchant, had arrived on the 28th of November.

On the 1st of December (1773), Captain James Bruce, in the ship Eleanor, arrived with another portion of the tea. On the 3d, he was ordered to attend the next day on a committee of the people in Faneuil Hall, where he was commanded by Samuel Adams and Jonathan Williams, assembled with John Rowe, John Hancock, William Phillips, and John Pitts, Esqrs., and a great number of others, not to land any of the said tea, but to proceed to Griffin's wharf and there discharge the rest of his cargo. Captain Coffin arrived in the brig Beaver near the same time, and was ordered to pursue the same course.

It being perceived that Mr. Rotch rather lingered in his preparations to return the Dartmouth to London, and the twenty days being nearly expired, after which the collector might seize the ship and cargo, Mr. Rotch was summoned before the committee when he stated to them that it would prove his entire ruin if he should comply with the resolutions of the 29th and 30th of November, and therefore he could not do it. A meeting of the people was assembled at the Old South on Tuesday, December 14th, when Mr. Rotch appeared, and was enjoined forthwith to demand a clearance. It was ascertained that one could not be obtained till the next day, and therefore the meeting was adjourned to Thursday, at the same place.

On Thursday, December 16, 1773, the meeting was immense. In addition to the inhabitants of Boston, 2,000 men at least were present from the country. Samuel Phillips Savage, Esq., of Weston, was appointed moderator. Mr. Rotch reported that the collector would not give him a clearance. He was then ordered upon his peril to get his ship ready for sea *this day*, enter a protest *immediately* against the custom house, and proceed *directly* to the Governor (then at Milton, seven miles distant), and demand a pass for his ship to go by the castle. An adjournment to 3 P. M. then took place. At 3, having met, they waited very patiently till 5 o'clock, when finding that Mr. Rotch did not return, they began to be very uneasy, called for a dissolution of the meeting, and obtained a vote for it. But the more judicious, fearing what would be the consequences, begged for a reconsideration of that vote, for this reason, "that they ought to do everything in their power to send the tea back, *according to their resolves*." This touched the pride of the assembly, and they agreed to remain together one hour.

This interval was improved by Josiah Quincy, Jr.,* to apprise his fellow citizens of the importance of the crisis, and direct their attention to the probable results of this controversy. "It is not, Mr. Moderator," he said, "the

*Josiah Quincy, Jr., a distinguished lawyer, orator, and patriot of Boston, Massachusetts, was born in that city February 23, 1744. He was educated at Harvard College, where he was remarkably persevering, and graduated with unblemished reputation in 1763. He early became eminent in the practice of the law; and the circumstances of the time turning his thoughts to political topics, he took sides with the most eminent leaders in the cause of freedom against the aggressive policy of Britain. His boldness of speech was remarkable. As early as 1768 he used this language: "Did the blood of the ancient Britons swell our veins, did the spirit of our forefathers inhabit our breasts, should we hesitate a moment in preferring death to a miserable existence in bondage?" Again, in 1770, he declared: "I wish to see my countrymen break off — *off forever!* all social intercourse with those whose commerce contaminates, whose luxuries poison, whose avarice is insatiable, and whose unnatural oppressions are not to be borne." He was associated with John Adams in the defense of the perpetrators of the "Boston Massacre," and did not by that defense alienate the good opinion of the people. In 1771 he was obliged to go south on account of a pulmonary complaint. At Charleston he formed an acquaintance with Pinckney, Rutledge, and other patriots; and, returning by land conferred with other leading Whigs in the several Colonies. Continued ill-health and a desire to make himself acquainted with English statesmen induced him to make a voyage to England in 1774, where he had personal interviews with most of the leading men. Becoming fully acquainted with the feelings and intentions of the King and his ministers, and hopeless of reconciliation Mr. Quincy determined to return and arouse his countrymen to action. He embarked for Boston with declining health in March, and on the 26th of April, 1775, when the vessel was in the harbor of Cape Ann, in sight of land, he died. Mr. Quincy's eminent talents and zealous attachment to the cause of freedom, as well as his amiable and interesting manners, made his early death a subject of universal lamentation.

spirit that vapors within these walls that must stand us in stead. The exertions of this day will call forth events which will make a very different spirit necessary for our salvation. Whoever supposes that shouts and hosannas will terminate the trials of this day entertains a childish fancy. He must be grossly ignorant of the importance and value of the prize for which we contend; we must be equally ignorant of the power of those who have combined against us; we must be blind to that malice, inveteracy, and insatiable revenge which actuate our enemies, public and private, abroad and in our bosoms, to hope that we shall end this controversy without the sharpest conflicts — to flatter ourselves that popular resolves, popular harangues, popular acclamations, and popular vapor will vanquish our foes. Let us consider the issue. Let us look to the end. Let us weigh and consider before we advance to those measures which must bring on the most trying and terrible struggle this country ever saw." He succeeded in holding them in attentive silence till Mr. Rotch's return, at three-quarters past 5 o'clock. The answer which he brought from the Governor was, "that for the honor of the laws, and from duty toward the King, he could not grant the permit until the vessel was regularly cleared." A violent commotion immediately ensued. A person who was in the gallery, disguised after the manner of the Indians, shouted at this juncture the cry of war; it was answered by about thirty persons disguised in like manner, at the door. The meeting was dissolved in the twinkling of an eye. The multitude rushed to Griffin's wharf. The disguised Indians went on board the ships laden with the tea. In less than two hours 240 chests and 100 half chests were staved and emptied into the dock. The affair was concluded without any tumult; no damage was done to the vessels or to any other effects whatever.

This was executed in the presence of several ships-of-war lying in the harbor, and almost under the guns of the castle, where there was a large body of troops at the command of the commissioners. We are left to conjecture for the reasons why no opposition was made to this bold adventure.

The promptness of the Bostonians in destroying the tea as soon as the meeting adjourned was fortunate for the cause of liberty. If they had delayed acting till the next day, the tea would have been placed under the protection of the admiral at the castle. After the work of destruction was completed the town became perfectly quiet, and the men from the country carried the news to their homes; and on the following day the committee of correspondence sent off an express, with their own account of what had been done, to New York and Philadelphia. The news was also speedily conveyed to England, and we now proceed to notice its effects in that country.

The British ministry appear to have been highly gratified that the town of Boston, which they ever regarded as the focus of sedition in America, had rendered itself, by the violent destruction of the property of the East India Company, obnoxious to their severest vengeance. On the 7th of March (1774), Lord North presented a message from the King to both houses of Parliament, in which it was stated, that "in consequence of the unwarrantable practices carried on in North America, and particularly of the violent and outrageous proceedings at the town and port of Boston, with a view of obstructing the commerce of this kingdom, and upon grounds and pretenses immediately subversive of its Constitution, it was thought fit to lay the whole matter before Parliament, recommending it to their serious consideration, what further regulations or

permanent provisions might be necessary to be established."

On presenting the papers, Lord North represented the conduct of Boston in the darkest colors. He said, "that the utmost lenity on the part of the Governor, perhaps too much, had been already shown; and that this town, by its late proceedings, had left the government perfectly at liberty to adopt any measures they should think convenient, not only for redressing the wrong sustained by the East India Company, but for inflicting such punishment as their factious and criminal conduct merited; and that the aid of Parliament would be resorted to for this purpose, and for vindicating the honor of the Crown, so daringly and wantonly attacked and contemned." In reply to the royal message, the House voted "that an address of thanks should be presented to the King, assuring His Majesty that they would not fail to exert every means in their power of effectually providing for the due execution of the laws, and securing the dependence of the Colonies upon the Crown and Parliament of Great Britain." In a few days a bill was introduced "for the immediate removal of the officers concerned in the collection of customs from Boston, and to discontinue the landing and discharging, lading and shipping of goods, wares, and merchandise at Boston, or within the harbor thereof." The bill also levied a fine upon the town, as a compensation to the East India Company for the destruction of their teas, and was to continue in force during the pleasure of the King. The opposition to this measure was very slight, and it was finally carried in both houses without a division.

This however was only a part of Lord North's scheme of coercion. He proposed two other bills which were intended to strike terror into the province of Massachusetts, and to deter the other Colonies from following her exam-

ple. By one of these, the Constitution and charter of the province were completely subverted, all power taken out of the hands of the people and placed in those of the servants of the Crown. The third scheme of Lord North was the introduction of "a bill for the impartial administration of justice in Massachusetts." By this act, persons informed against or indicted for any act done in opposition to the laws of the revenue, or for the suppression of riots in Massachusetts, might by the Governor, with the advice of the council, be sent for trial to any other Colony, or to Great Britain; an enactment which, in effect, conferred impunity on the officers of the Crown, however odious might be their violations of the law.

Some distinguished statesmen opposed these plans of the administration with great eloquence and zeal. The celebrated Burke declared that "it was only oppressive and unjust laws which the people had opposed; that it was most unreasonable to condemn them without a hearing; and that constitutional principles were not to be settled by the military arm." Pownall observed that "it was no longer a matter of opinion with the citizens of Massachusetts; that things had come to action; that the Americans would resist all attempts to coerce them, and were prepared to do it; and that if there should be a rebellion in the province, the question would be, who caused it?"

The Duke of Richmond, the Marquis of Rockingham, and other peers insisted that the charter was a solemn contract, which neither the King nor Parliament could justly annul or alter without the consent of the subjects in Massachusetts, unless they had forfeited their rights by an infraction of its provisions. Lord Chatham also opposed these plans of the administration, with all his former energy and spirit; although at this time he was in such a debilitated state that he seldom took part in the debates of

Parliament. He declared himself most decidedly in favor of conciliatory measures; for he was of opinion that the province had been oppressed, and the liberties of the subject therein most flagrantly violated. He believed that just measures on the part of ministers would quiet the Colonies and restore harmony between them and the parent state. He denounced the proposed system as unconstitutional and tyrannical, and predicted that the people of Massachusetts would never submit to such palpable and repeated violations of their political rights.

Colonel Barre also addressed the ministry on the last bill in the following bold and energetic language: "You have changed your ground. You are become the aggressors, and offering the last of human outrages to the people of America, by subjecting them to military execution. Instead of sending them the olive-branch, you have sent the naked sword. By the olive-branch I mean a repeal of all the late laws, fruitless to you and oppressive to them. Ask their aid in a constitutional manner, and they will give it to the utmost of their ability. They never yet refused it when properly required. Your journals bear the recorded acknowledgments of the zeal with which they have contributed to the general necessities of the state. What madness is it that prompts you to attempt obtaining that by force, which you may more certainly procure by requisition? They may be flattered into anything, but they are too much like yourselves to be driven. Have some indulgence for your own likeness; respect their sturdy English virtue; retract your odious exertions of authority; and remember that the first step toward making them contribute to your wants is to reconcile them to your government."

These measures of the British ministers originated partly in mistaken views of the opinions and temper of the people.

Great misrepresentation had been made for several years to the administration in England respecting the state of the Colonies. It was declared by the officers of the Crown and some other individuals, that it was only a few ambitious persons who objected to the policy of the parent state, while the friends and agents of the people were not permitted to be heard in their attempts to show the general dissatisfaction.

It is also true that Lord North and several other members of the British cabinet at this period possessed high notions of the supremacy of Parliament, and of the sovereign power of the King; the more correct and just principles of civil liberty, recognized in 1689, and still received by many eminent statesmen in England, were not in fashion with the court party.

Assuming the doctrine of the supreme and unlimited authority of Parliament over all parts of the empire (which, in a certain sense, restricted and qualified, however, by great constitutional principles, had been generally admitted in the Colonies), ministers insisted that the power of the parent government was entirely without control; and contended for the legitimacy of measures which the patriots in both countries considered most arbitrary, and wholly destructive of the liberties of the subject.

With these views of government, they maintained that any measures were justifiable for supporting the authority of the King and Parliament; and they calculated upon bringing the refractory and disaffected to ready submission by severity and force. It will soon be apparent however, that it was not a faction in Boston by which opposition was kept alive in America; and that throughout this and other provinces but one sentiment prevailed as to the oppressive and arbitrary conduct of the parent government, and one

determination to oppose and prevent the continuance of such a system of policy.

Notwithstanding these successive measures, from which such important results were professedly expected, it is evident that the government entertained serious apprehensions that an appeal to arms was by no means improbable. The English cabinet sought therefore to ingratiate themselves with the newly acquired provinces of Canada, and the proceedings they adopted with this view appear to have been the only measures which were characterized by the slightest indications of wisdom.

The Canadian noblesse had enjoyed great authority under the dominion of their native country, and they had recently been complaining of the abridgement of their privileges, while the inhabitants, who were chiefly Catholic, had been viewing with jealousy the superior privileges of the Protestants; Lord North therefore did not suffer the session to close without introducing a bill calculated to insure the affections of the Canadians. It erected a Legislative council, nominated by the Crown, on whom very extensive powers were conferred, which was very gratifying to the Canadian nobility; the Catholic clergy were established in their privileges, and a perfect equality between their religion and that of the Protestants was established; the French laws were confirmed, and trial without jury permitted in all except criminal cases. To afford a wider field for ministerial maneuvers, the limits of the province of Quebec were extended to the river Ohio.

To these prudent concessions to the sentiments of the Canadians may be attributed, in a great measure, the singular fact of their remaining attached to the British Government during the Revolutionary contest, when it might not unreasonably have been anticipated that they would

have been the first to throw off a foreign yoke, and declare their independence.

As a measure indicative of a determination to conduct the proceedings against the refractory colonists with the utmost vigor, General Gage was appointed, with powers of the most unlimited extent, to supersede Governor Hutchinson. The offices of governor of the province of Massachusetts and commander of His Majesty's forces in America were united in his person. The intelligence of the passing of the Boston Port Bill had preceded General Gage a few days. The new Governor, though it appeared that he entertained serious apprehensions of some disorderly or disrespectful conduct on the part of the people, was received by them with every mark of civility. He had soon occasion to perceive however that their politeness to him did not proceed from any fear of his authority, or from any relaxation in their purposes of resistance. On the day after his arrival (1774), the General Court having been dissolved by the late Governor, a town meeting was convened and very numerously attended. They declared and resolved, "that the impolicy, injustice, inhumanity, and cruelty of the act exceed all their powers of expression; and therefore," they said, "we leave it to the censure of others, and appeal to God and the world."

They also declared it as their opinion, that "if the other Colonies came into a joint resolution to stop all importations from, and exportations to, Great Britain and every part of the West Indies, till the act be repealed, the same would prove the salvation of North America, and her liberties."

The idea was probably entertained by the British ministry that the other Colonies would be inclined rather to avail themselves of the commercial advantages which the closing of one of the chief seaports would open to them

than to make common cause with Boston at the hazard of incurring a similar penalty. In this instance, as in most others, the government made a great miscalculation of the American character. The several Colonies lost no time in expressing the deepest sympathy for the sufferings of the inhabitants of Boston, and in contributing to their pecuniary necessities, as well as in affording them moral countenance.

The House of Burgesses in Virginia was in session when the bill for closing the port of Boston arrived. On May 24, 1774, they passed the following order: "This House, being deeply impressed with apprehension of the great dangers to be derived to British America from the hostile invasion of the city of Boston, in our sister Colony of Massachusetts Bay, whose commerce and harbor are, on the 1st day of June next, to be stopped by an armed force, deem it highly necessary that the said 1st day of June next be set apart by the members of this House as a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer, devoutly to implore the Divine interposition for averting the heavy calamity which threatens destruction to our civil rights, and the evils of civil war; to give us one heart and one mind firmly to oppose, by all just and proper means, every injury to American rights; and that the minds of His Majesty and his Parliament may be inspired from above with wisdom, moderation, and justice to remove from the loyal people of America all cause of danger from a continued pursuit of measures pregnant with their ruin. Ordered, therefore, that the members of this House do attend in their places, at the hour of 10 in the forenoon, on the said 1st day of June next, in order to proceed with Speaker and the mace to the church in this city, for the purposes aforesaid; and that the Rev. Mr. Price be ap-

pointed to read prayers and to preach a sermon suitable to the occasion."

The next day (May 25th) the House, for this independent conduct, was dissolved by the Governor, Lord Dunmore. Thereupon the members, eighty-nine in number, immediately repaired to the Raleigh Tavern, and, forming themselves into a vigilance committee, adopted a spirited declaration of their views, denouncing the Boston Port Bill as a most dangerous attempt to destroy the constitutional liberty and rights of all North America; recommending their countrymen to desist from the use, not merely of tea, but of all kinds of East Indian commodities; pronouncing an attack on one of the Colonies to enforce arbitrary taxes an attack on all; and ordering the committee of correspondence to communicate with the other corresponding committees on the *expediency of appointing deputies* from the several Colonies of British America, to meet *annually in General Congress*, at such place as might be deemed expedient, to deliberate on such measures as the *united interests of the Colonies* might require.

This was the first recommendation of a General Congress by any public assembly, though it had been previously proposed in town meetings at New York and Boston. A *resolution to the same effect* was passed in the Assembly of *Massachusetts* before it was aware of the proceedings of the Virginia Legislature. The measure recommended met with prompt and general concurrence throughout the Colonies, and the *5th day of September* next ensuing was fixed upon for *the first Congress*, which was to be held at Philadelphia.

Washington, at his post as a member of the House, took a full share in its patriotic proceedings, and proved himself no idle spectator of this important progress of events. His whole soul was deeply interested in the mo-

mentous questions at issue; and, although on intimate terms with Lord Dunmore, he was prepared to join his countrymen with all his energies in resisting the tyrannous course of Parliament.*

Before all the members of the House of Burgesses left Williamsburg, news came from Boston of a town meeting in that place, in which it was resolved to invite the people of all the Colonies to unite in an agreement to hold no further commercial intercourse with Great Britain, either by imports or exports. Washington was one of the twenty-five delegates still at the seat of government. As there was some difference of opinion among them as to the proper course to be pursued, they went no farther than to issue a circular letter, recommending a meeting of delegates at Williamsburg on the 1st of August, to deliberate on the subject. This circular was printed and distributed throughout Virginia.†

The difference of opinion among the delegates was in relation to the withholding of exports to Great Britain. To the nonimportation agreement they were already committed, and all were willing to adhere strictly to it. But the withholding of exports would involve the practical repudiation of large debts to merchants in England, which

* [Washington had dined with Lord Dunmore May 16th, at Williamsburg, then a gay, aristocratic capital, where social pretension was at its best, and none more distinguished than himself. It was for the opening of the House of Burgesses that he had come. On the 24th of May, three days before the date on which a splendid ball was appointed to be given in honor of Lady Dunmore, news of the closing of the port of Boston was received, and energetic action taken, as stated above. Washington dined again at Lord Dunmore's and spent the evening on the 25th; he rode out with him to his farm and breakfasted there with him on the 26th; and on the 27th he attended the ball in honor of her ladyship. But these courtesies had no effect to give pause to his patriotism.]

† Sparks, "Life of Washington," p. 115.

could only be paid by sending out the productions of the country, particularly the staple of Virginia — tobacco.

On this head, Washington, in strict consistency with his uniform character for honor and integrity, took a decisive stand. Writing to his friend, Bryan Fairfax, July 4, 1774, he says: ["As to your political sentiments, I would heartily join you in them, so far as relates to a humble and dutiful petition to the throne, provided there was the most distant hope of success. But have we not tried this already? Have we not addressed the Lords, and remonstrated to the Commons? And to what end? Did they deign to look at our petitions? Does it not appear as clear as the sun in its meridian brightness, that there is a regular, systematic plan formed to fix the right and practice of taxation upon us? Does not the uniform conduct of Parliament for some years past confirm this? Do not all the debates, especially those just brought to us, in the House of Commons on the side of the government, expressly declare that America must be taxed in aid of British funds, and that she has no longer resources within herself? Is there anything to be expected from petitioning after this? Is not the attack upon the liberty and property of the people of Boston, before restitution of the loss to the India Company was demanded, a plain and self-evident proof of what they are aiming at? Do not the subsequent bills (now I dare say acts), for depriving the Massachusetts Bay of its charter, and for transporting offenders into other colonies or to Great Britain for trial, where it is impossible from the nature of the thing that justice can be obtained, convince us that the administration is determined to stick at nothing to carry its point?

"Ought we not then, to put our virtue and fortitude to the severest test?]

"With you I think it folly to attempt more than

we can execute, as that will not only bring disgrace upon us, but weaken our cause; yet I think we may do more than is generally believed, in respect to the nonimportation scheme. As to the withholding of our remittances, that is another point in which I own I have my doubts on several accounts, but principally on that of justice; for I think, whilst we are accusing others of injustice, we should be just ourselves; and how this can be, whilst we owe a considerable debt, and refuse payment of it, to Great Britain, is to me inconceivable. Nothing but the last extremity, I think, can justify it. Whether this is now come is the question."

[To this Bryan Fairfax replied by a letter of July 17, 1774. Meanwhile, or before this letter was delivered, the inhabitants of the county had met, first on the 5th of July, and again on the 18th; had appointed a committee, of which Washington was chairman, as well as moderator of the meetings held, to prepare resolutions; and these resolutions, "revised, altered, and corrected in the committee," were being adopted. The letter of Bryan Fairfax, a long one, particularly objecting to any denial of the authority of Parliament, came to Washington when the resolutions were before the meeting over which he was presiding. Hastily looking it through, he "handed it round to the gentlemen on the bench,* of which there were many," "the first people in the country," and found it so little acceptable as to make it inadvisable to have it read, as Mr. B. Fairfax requested.] In reply to it Washington wrote, July 20, 1774:

"That I differ very widely from you," said he, "in respect to the mode of obtaining a repeal of the acts so much

*[The terms used here show how the English custom of a bench of magistrates, at the courthouse, was the usage of Virginia, as it was the usage of New England.]

and so justly complained of, I shall not hesitate to acknowledge; and that this difference in opinion probably proceeds from the different constructions we put upon the conduct and intentions of the ministry may also be true; but, as I see nothing, on the one hand, to induce a belief that the Parliament would embrace a favorable opportunity for repealing acts which they go on with great rapidity to pass, in order to enforce their tyrannical system; and, on the other, I observe, or think I observe, that government is pursuing a regular plan, at the expense of law and justice, to overthrow our constitutional rights and liberties, how can I expect any redress from a measure which has been ineffectually tried already? For, sir, what is it we are contending against? Is it against paying the duty of three pence per pound on tea because burdensome? No, it is the right only that we have all along disputed; and to this end we have already petitioned His Majesty in as humble and dutiful a manner as subjects could do. Nay, more, we applied to the House of Lords and House of Commons, in their different legislative capacities, setting forth that, as Englishmen, we could not be deprived of this essential and valuable part of our Constitution. If, then, as the fact really is, it is against the right of taxation that we now do, and, as I before said, all along have contended, why should they suppose an exertion of this power would be less obnoxious now than formerly? And what reason have we to believe that they would make a second attempt, whilst the same sentiments fill the breast of every American, if they did not intend to enforce it if possible?

[" The conduct of the Boston people could not justify the rigor of their measures, unless there had been a requisition of payment and refusal of it; nor did that measure require an act to deprive the government of Massachu-

setts Bay of their charter, or to exempt offenders from trial in the place where offences were committed, as there could not be a single instance produced to manifest the necessity of it. Are not all these things self evident proofs of a fixed and uniform plan to tax us? If we want further proofs, do not all the debates in the House of Commons serve to confirm this? And has not General Gage's conduct since his arrival (in stopping the address of his Council, and publishing a proclamation more becoming a Turkish bashaw than an English Governor, declaring it treason to associate in any manner by which the commerce of Great Britain is to be affected,) exhibited an unexampled testimony of the most despotic system of tyranny that ever was practiced in a free government?

"In short, what further proofs are wanting to satisfy any one of the designs of the ministry than their own acts, which are uniform and plainly tending to the same point, nay, if I mistake not, avowedly to fix the right of taxation? What hope have we then from petitioning, when they tell us that now or never is the time to fix the matter? Shall we, after this, whine and cry for relief, when we have already tried it in vain? Or shall we supinely sit and see one province after another fall a sacrifice to despotism?

"If I were in any doubt as to the right which the Parliament of Great Britain had to tax us without our consent, I should most heartily coincide with you in opinion that to petition, and petition only, is the proper method to apply for relief; because we should then be asking a favor, and not claiming a right, which, by the law of nature and by our Constitution, we are, in my opinion, indubitably entitled to. I should even think it criminal to go further than this under such an idea; but I have none such. I think the Parliament of Great Britain have no more right to put their hands into my pocket without my

consent than I have to put my hands into yours; and, this being already urged to them in a firm but decent manner, by all the Colonies, what reason is there to expect anything from their justice?"

"As to the resolution for addressing the throne, I own to you, Sir, I think the whole might as well have been expunged. I expect nothing from the measure, nor should my voice have accompanied it, if the non-importation scheme was intended to be retarded by it; for I am convinced, as much as I am of my existence, that there is no relief for us but in their distress; and I think, at least I hope, that there is public virtue enough left among us to deny ourselves everything but the bare necessaries of life to accomplish this end. This we have a right to do, and no power upon earth can compel us to do otherwise till it has first reduced us to the most abject state of slavery. The stopping of our exports would, no doubt, be a shorter method than the other to effect this purpose; but, if we owe money to Great Britain, nothing but the last necessity can justify the nonpayment of it; and therefore I have great doubts upon this head, and wish to see the other method first tried, which is legal and will facilitate these payments.

"I cannot conclude without expressing some concern that I should differ so widely in sentiment from you, in a matter of such great moment and general import; and should much distrust my own judgment upon the occasion, if my nature did not recoil at the thought of submitting to measures which I think subversive of everything that I ought to hold dear and valuable, and did I not find at the same time, that the voice of mankind is with me."

Mr. B. Fairfax replied to the above, and Washington wrote further, August 24, 1774:

"I can only in general add that an innate spirit of free-

dom first told me that the measures which [the King's] administration hath for some time been and now are most violently pursuing, are repugnant to every principle of natural justice; whilst much abler heads than my own have fully convinced me, that it is not only repugnant to natural right; but subversive of the laws and constitution of Great Britain itself, in the establishment of which some of the best blood in the kingdom hath been spilt. Satisfied, then, that the acts of a British Parliament are no longer governed by the principles of justice; that it is trampling upon the valuable rights of Americans confirmed to them by charter, and by the constitution they themselves boast of; and convinced beyond the smallest doubt, that these measures are the result of deliberation, and attempted to be carried into execution by the hand of power, is it a time to trifle, or risk our cause upon petitions, which with difficulty obtain access, and afterwards are thrown by with the utmost contempt? Or should we, because heretofore unsuspicious of design, and then unwilling to enter into disputes with the mother country, go on to bear more, and forbear to enumerate our just causes of complaint?

"For my own part, I shall not undertake to say where the line between Great Britain and the Colonies should be drawn, but I am clearly of opinion that one ought to be drawn and our rights clearly ascertained. I could wish, I own, that the dispute had been left for posterity to determine, but the crisis is arrived when we must assert our rights or submit to every imposition that can be heaped upon us, till custom shall make us as tame and abject slaves as the blacks we rule over with such arbitrary sway.

"If you disavow the right of Parliament to tax us, (unrepresented as we are), we only differ in respect to the mode of opposition, and this difference principally arises

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from your belief that they — the Parliament — want a decent opportunity to repeal the acts; whilst I am as fully convinced, as I am of my own existence, that there has been a regular systematic plan formed to enforce them, and that nothing but unanimity in the colonies (a stroke they did not expect) and firmness, can prevent it. It seems from the best advices from Boston, that General Gage is exceedingly disconcerted at the quiet and steady conduct of the people of Massachusetts Bay, and at the measures pursuing by the other governments; as I dare say he expected to have forced those oppressed people into compliance, or irritated them to acts of violence, before this, for a more colorable pretense of ruling that and the other colonies with a high hand. But I am done.

"I shall set off on Wednesday next for Philadelphia."]

Lord Chatham, in his celebrated speech in the House of Lords, on the 20th of January, 1775, on the motion for removing the troops from Boston, uttered the following sentiments, which seem like an echo of those expressed by Washington in the letter above quoted:

"This glorious spirit of whiggism animates three millions in America, who prefer poverty with liberty to gilded chains and sordid affluence; and who will die in defense of their rights as men, as freemen. What shall oppose this spirit, aided by the congenial flame glowing in the breast of every Whig in England, to the amount, I hope, of double the American numbers? Ireland they have to a man. In that country, joined as it is with the cause of Colonies, and placed at their head, the distinction I contend for is and must be observed. This country superintends and controls their trade and navigation; but they tax themselves. And this distinction between external and internal control is sacred and insurmountable; it is involved in the abstract nature of things. Property is

private, individual, absolute. Trade is an extended and complicated consideration; it reaches as far as ships can sail, or winds can blow; it is a great and various machine. To regulate the numberless movements of its several parts and combine them into effect, for the good of the whole, requires the superintending wisdom and energy of the supreme power in the empire. But this supreme power has no effect toward internal taxation; for it does not exist in that relation; there is no such thing, no such idea in this Constitution, as a supreme power operating upon property. Let this distinction then remain forever ascertained; taxation is theirs, commercial regulation is ours. As an American, I would recognize to England her supreme right of regulating commerce and navigation; as an Englishman by birth and principle, I recognize to the Americans their supreme inalienable right in their property; a right which they are justified in the defense of to the last extremity. To maintain this principle is the common cause of the Whigs on the other side of the Atlantic and on this. 'Tis liberty to liberty engaged,' that they will defend themselves, their families, and their country. In this great cause they are immovably allied; it is the alliance of God and nature — immutable, eternal, fixed as the firmament of heaven.

"To such united force, what force shall be opposed? What, my lords! A few regiments in America and 17,000 or 18,000 men at home! The idea is too ridiculous to take up a moment of your lordships' time. Nor can such a national and principled union be resisted by the tricks of office, or ministerial maneuver. Laying of papers on your table, or counting numbers on a division, will not avert or postpone the hour of danger. It must arrive, my lords, unless these fatal acts are done away; it must arrive in all its horrors, and then these boastful ministers,

spite of all their confidence and all their maneuvers, shall be forced to hide their heads. They shall be forced to a disgraceful abandonment of their present measures and principles which they avow, but cannot defend; measures which they presume to attempt, but cannot hope to effectuate. They cannot, my lords, they cannot stir a step; they have not a move left; they are checkmated.

"But it is not repealing this act of Parliament, it is not repealing a piece of parchment, that can restore America to our bosom. You must repeal her fears and her resentments, and you may then hope for her love and gratitude. But now, insulted with an armed force posted at Boston, irritated with a hostile array before her eyes, her concessions, if you could force them, would be suspicious and insecure; they will be *irato animo;* they will not be the sound, honorable passions of freemen; they will be the dictates of fear and extortions of force. But it is more than evident that you cannot force them, united as they are, to your unworthy terms of submission; it is impossible. And when I hear General Gage censured for inactivity, I must retort with indignation on those whose intemperate measures and improvident councils have betrayed him into his present situation."

Washington was present in the convention at Williamsburg as a member from Fairfax county, which met on the 1st of August (1774), and presented the elaborate resolutions prepared by Mason. His speech in support of them was spoken of at the time as remarkably eloquent. The importance of the crisis no doubt awakened all his powers of oratory. In the height of his enthusiasm he even expressed a willingness to raise 1,000 men and march at their head to the relief of Boston.

The resolutions thus presented remained among Washington's papers. Their substance was as follows:

"At a general meeting of the freeholders and inhabitants of the county of Fairfax, on Monday, the 18th day of July, 1774, at the courthouse, George Washington, chairman, and Robert Harrison, clerk, of the said meeting:

"1st. *Resolved*, That this Colony and Dominion of Virginia cannot be considered as a conquered country; and if it was, that the present inhabitants are the descendants, not of the conquered, but of the conquerors. That the same was not settled at the national expense of England, but at the private expense of the adventurers, our ancestors, by solemn compact with, and under the auspices and protection of, the British Crown; upon which we are, in every respect, as dependent as the people of Great Britain, and in the same manner subject to all His Majesty's just, legal, and constitutional prerogatives. That our ancestors, when they left their native land and settled in America, brought with them (even if the same had not been confined by charters) the civil Constitution and form of government of the country they came from; and were, by the laws of nature and nations, entitled to all its privileges, immunities, and advantages, which have descended to us, their posterity, and ought of right to be as fully enjoyed as if we had still continued within the realm of England.

"2d. *Resolved*, That the most important and valuable part of the British Constitution, upon which its very existence depends, is the fundamental principle of the people's being governed by no laws to which they have not given their consent by representatives freely chosen by themselves; who are affected by the laws they enact equally with their constituents; to whom they are accountable, and whose burdens they share.

"3d. *Resolved*, Therefore, as the inhabitants of the American Colonies are not, and, from their situation, cannot be represented in the British Parliament, that the

legislative power here can of right be exercised only by our own provincial assemblies or parliaments, subject to the assent or negative of the British Crown, to be declared within some proper limited time. But as it was thought just and reasonable that the people of Great Britain should reap advantages from these Colonies adequate to the protection they afforded them, the British Parliament have claimed and exercised the power of regulating our trade and commerce, so as to restrain our importing from foreign countries such articles as they could furnish us with of their own growth or manufacture; or exporting to foreign countries such articles and portions of our produce as Great Britain stood in need of for her own consumption or manufactures. Such a power, directed with wisdom and moderation, seems necessary for the general good of that great body politic, of which we are a part; although in some degree repugnant to the principles of the Constitution. Under this idea our ancestors submitted to it; the experience of more than a century during the government of His Majesty's royal predecessors has proved its utility, and the reciprocal benefits flowing from it produced mutual uninterrupted harmony and good-will between the inhabitants of Great Britain and her Colonies, who, during that long period, always considered themselves as one and the same people.

"4th. *Resolved*, That it is the duty of these Colonies on all emergencies to contribute, in proportion to their abilities, situation, and circumstances, to the necessary charge of supporting and defending the British Empire, of which they are a part.

"5th. *Resolved*, That the claim lately assumed and exercised by the British Parliament, of making all such laws as they think fit to govern the people of these Colonies, and to extort from us our money without our consent, is

not only diametrically contrary to the first principles of the Constitution and the original compacts by which we are dependent upon the British Crown and Government, but is totally incompatible with the privileges of a free people and the natural rights of mankind.

"6th. *Resolved*, That taxation and representation are in their nature inseparable.

"7th. *Resolved*, That the powers over the people of America, now claimed by the British House of Commons, in whose election we have no share, on whose determinations we can have no influence, whose information must be always defective and often false, who in many instances may have a separate, and in some an opposite, interest to ours, and who are removed from those impressions of tenderness and compassion arising from personal intercourse and connection, which soften the rigors of the most despotic governments, must, if continued, establish the most grievous and intolerable species of tyranny and oppression that ever was inflicted upon mankind.

"8th. *Resolved*, That it is our greatest wish and inclination, as well as interest, to continue our connection with and dependence upon the British Government; but though we are its subjects, we will use every means which heaven hath given us to prevent our becoming its slaves.

"9th. *Resolved*, That there is a premeditated design and system formed and pursued by the British ministry to introduce an arbitrary government into His Majesty's American dominions.

"10th. *Resolved*, That the several acts of Parliament for raising a revenue upon the people of America without their consent, the creating new and dangerous jurisdictions here, the taking our trials by jury, the ordering persons, upon criminal accusations, to be tried in another country than that in which the act is charged to have

been committed, the act inflicting ministerial vengeance upon the town of Boston, and the two bills lately brought into Parliament for abrogating the charter of the province of Massachusetts Bay, and for the protection and encouragement of murderers in said province, are part of the above-mentioned iniquitous system.

"11th. *Resolved,* That we will cordially join with our friends and brethren of this and the other Colonies in such measures as shall be judged most effectual for procuring redress of our grievances, and that upon obtaining such redress, if the destruction of the tea at Boston be regarded as an invasion of private property, we shall be willing to contribute toward paying the East India Company the value.

"12th. *Resolved,* That nothing will so much contribute to defeat the pernicious designs of the common enemies of Great Britain and her Colonies as a firm union of the latter, who ought to regard every act of violence or oppression inflicted upon any one of them as aimed at all; and to effect this desirable purpose, that a Congress should be appointed, to consist of deputies from all the Colonies, to concert a general and uniform plan for the defense and preservation of our common rights, and continuing the connection and dependence of the said Colonies upon Great Britain, under a just, lenient, permanent, and constitutional form of government.

"13th. *Resolved,* That our most sincere and cordial thanks be given to the patrons and friends of liberty in Great Britain for their spirited and patriotic conduct in support of our constitutional rights and privileges, and their generous efforts to prevent the present distress and calamity of America.

"14th. *Resolved,* That every little jarring interest and dispute which has ever happened between these Colonies

should be buried in eternal oblivion; that all manner of luxury and extravagance ought immediately to be laid aside as totally inconsistent with the threatening and gloomy prospect before us; that it is the indispensable duty of all the gentlemen and men of fortune to set examples of temperance, frugality, and industry, and give every encouragement in their power, particularly by subscriptions and premiums, to the improvement of arts and manufactures in America; that great care and attention should be had to the cultivation of flax, cotton, and other materials for manufactures; and we recommend it to such of the inhabitants as have large stocks of sheep to sell to their neighbors at a moderate price, as the most certain means of speedily increasing our breed of sheep and quantity of wool.

"15th. *Resolved*, That until American grievances be redressed, by restoration of our just rights and privileges, no goods or merchandise whatever ought to be imported into this Colony which shall be shipped from Great Britain or Ireland after the 1st day of September next, except linens not exceeding fifteen pence per yard, coarse woollen cloth not exceeding two shillings sterling per yard, nails, wire and wire cards, needles and pins, paper, saltpetre, and medicines, which may be imported until the 1st day of September, 1776.

"16th. *Resolved*, That it is the opinion of this meeting that the merchants and vendors of goods and merchandise within this Colony should take an oath not to sell or dispose of any goods or merchandise whatsoever, which may be shipped from Great Britain after the 1st day of September next, as aforesaid, except the articles before excepted.

"17th. *Resolved*, That it is the opinion of this meeting that during our present difficulties and distress no slaves

ought to be imported into any of the British Colonies on this continent; and *we take this opportunity of declaring our most earnest wishes to see an entire stop forever put to such a wicked, cruel, and unnatural trade.*

"18th. *Resolved*, That no kind of lumber should be exported from this Colony to the West Indies until America be restored to her constitutional rights and liberties, if the other Colonies will accede to a like resolution.

"19th. *Resolved*, That it is the opinion of this meeting, if American grievances be not redressed before the 1st day of November, 1775, that all exports of produce from the several Colonies to Great Britain should cease; and to carry the said resolution more effectually into execution, that we will not plant or cultivate any tobacco after the crop now growing.

"20th. *Resolved*, That it is the opinion of this meeting that a solemn covenant and association should be entered into by the inhabitants of all the Colonies upon oath, that they will not, after the times which shall be respectively agreed on at the General Congress, export any manner of lumber to the West Indies, nor any of their produce to Great Britain, or sell or dispose of the same to any person who shall not have entered into the said covenant and association; and also, that they will not import or receive any goods or merchandise which shall be shipped from Great Britain after the 1st day of September next, other than the before-enumerated articles, nor buy or purchase any goods, except as before excepted, of any person whatsoever, who shall not have taken the oath hereinbefore recommended to be taken by the merchants and venders of goods, nor buy or purchase any slaves hereafter imported into any part of this continent, until a free exportation and importation be again resolved on by a majority of the representatives or deputies of the Colonies.

And that the respective committees of the counties in each Colony, so soon as the covenant and association becomes general, publish by advertisements in their several counties, a list of the names of those (if any such there be) who will not accede thereto; *that such traitors to their country may be publicly known and detested.*

"21st. *Resolved*, That it is the opinion of this meeting that this and the other associating Colonies should break off all trade, intercourse, and dealings with that Colony, province, or town which shall decline or refuse to agree to the plan which shall be adopted by the General Congress.

"22d. *Resolved*, That should the town of Boston be forced to submit to the late cruel and oppressive measures of government, that we should not hold the same to be binding upon us, but will, notwithstanding, religiously maintain and inviolably adhere to such measures as shall be concerted by the General Congress for the preservation of our lives, liberties, and fortunes.

"23d. *Resolved*, That it be recommended to the deputies of the General Congress to draw up and transmit an humble and dutiful petition and remonstrance to His Majesty, asserting with decent firmness our just and constitutional rights and privileges; lamenting the fatal necessity of being compelled to enter into measures disgusting to His Majesty and to his Parliament, or injurious to our fellow-subjects in Great Britain; declaring, in the strongest terms, our duty and affection to His Majesty's person, family, and government, and our desire to continue our dependence upon Great Britain; and most humbly conjuring and beseeching His Majesty not to reduce his faithful subjects of America to a state of desperation, and to reflect that *from our sovereign there can be but one appeal.* And it is the opinion of this meeting that after such peti-

tion and remonstrance shall have been presented to His Majesty, the same should be printed in the public papers in all the principal towns in Great Britain.

"24th. *Resolved*, That George Washington and Charles Broadwater, lately elected our representatives to serve in the General Assembly, be appointed to attend the convention at Williamsburg, on the 1st day of August next, and present these resolves, as the sense of the people of this county, upon the measures proper to be taken in the present alarming and dangerous situation in America."

The convention adopted a new association, in which a middle course was taken in the matter of exports, which had been so much discussed in Virginia, certain times being fixed when all intercourse with the mother country, both by imports and exports, should be suspended unless the obnoxious acts of Parliament should be previously repealed.

The convention remained in session six days, passed resolutions breathing the same spirit as that of the Fairfax county resolves, and appointed and gave instructions to the following gentlemen as delegates to the General Congress: Peyton Randolph, Richard Henry Lee, George Washington, Patrick Henry, Richard Bland, Benjamin Harrison, Edward Pendleton.

[The earliest reputation of Jefferson as a writer was made by his "A Summary View of the Rights of British America: Set forth in some Resolutions intended for the inspection of the present Delegates of the People of Virginia now in Convention." Jefferson had been elected a member of the convention, and prepared the "Resolutions" for submission to the delegates in connection with their election of Virginia delegates to the First Continental Congress. An accidental illness rendered him unable to be present at the convention, and he sent copies of his

document to Patrick Henry and Peyton Randolph. The latter laid the document before the convention, which however preferred adopting a statement less sharply and sternly critical of British treatment of the Colonies. Knowing however that Jefferson's resolutions more exactly fitted the case than those of the convention, his friends immediately printed the document, with the frank admission that but for motives of policy, on the part of the more moderate and conservative members of the convention, it would have been accepted, on the ground that "In it the sources of our unhappy differences are traced with such faithful accuracy, and the opinions entertained by every free American expressed with such manly firmness, that it must be pleasing to the present and may be useful to future ages." Edmund Randolph relates that he distinctly recollected the applause bestowed on the greater number of Jefferson's resolutions by a large company to whom they were read at the house of Peyton Randolph, although others were not equally approved. Randolph explains that Dickinson, in the celebrated "Pennsylvania Farmer" letters, had urged some measure of concession to British taxation of the Colonies, and that while the younger men were with Jefferson, the older were with Dickinson. Jefferson's resolutions boldly proposed that the deputies to be sent to a Continental Congress should present to the English King "their joint address, penned in the language of truth, and divested of those expressions of civility which would persuade His Majesty that we are asking favors and not rights." After reviewing those less alarming violations of American right which had been repeated at more distant intervals through the reigns which preceded His Majesty's, and having remarked on the "Rapid and Bold Succession of Injuries" of the King's own time, characterizing it as "A Series of

Oppressions, begun at a distinguished period, and pursued unalterable through every change of ministers, too plainly proving a deliberate and systematical plan of reducing us to slavery," Jefferson's summary of suggestions for an address went on to say:

"Not only the principles of common sense, but the common feelings of human nature, must be surrendered up before His Majesty's subjects here can be persuaded to believe that they hold their political existence at the will of a British Parliament." Having indicated, in thus scoring the King's ministry, that he looked through ministers and ministerial acts to the monarch himself for the authorship of "A Series of Oppressions," dating from his accession, Jefferson's document next proceeded to consider the conduct of His Majesty. Speaking of the veto power, and pronouncing without excuse "the wanton exercise of this power which we have seen His Majesty practice on the laws of the American Legislatures," the complaint went on to say: "For the most trifling reasons, and sometimes for no conceivable reason at all, His Majesty has rejected laws of the most salutary tendency. The *abolition of domestic slavery is the great object of desire in those Colonies where it was unhappily introduced in their infant state.* But, previous to the enfranchisement of the slaves we have, it is necessary to exclude all further importations from Africa; yet our repeated attempts to effect this by prohibitions, and by imposing duties which might amount to a prohibition, have been hitherto defeated by His Majesty's negative, thus preferring the immediate advantages of a few African corsairs to the lasting interest of the American States, and to the right of human nature, deeply wounded by this infamous practice." Concluding his recital of grievances, Jefferson said, in respect to the freedom of language and sentiment used in it: "Let

those flatter who fear; it is not an American art. To give praise which is not due might be well from the venal, but would ill beseem those who are asserting the rights of human nature. They know, and will therefore say, that Kings are the servants not the proprietors of the people. Open your breast, Sire, to liberal and expanding thought. Let not *the name of George III be a blot in the page of history.* You are surrounded by British counsellors, but remember that they are partisans. You have no ministers for American affairs, because you have none taken from among us, nor amenable to the laws on which they are to give you advice. It behooves you therefore to think and act for yourself and your people. The great principles of right and wrong are legible to every reader; to pursue them requires not the aid of many counsellors. The whole art of government consists in the art of being honest. Only aim to do your duty, and mankind will give you credit where you fail. No longer persevere in sacrificing the rights of one part of the empire to the inordinate desires of another; but deal out to all equal and impartial right. Let no act be passed by any one Legislature which may infringe on the rights and liberties of another. This is the important post in which fortune has placed you, holding the balance of a great, if a well-poised, empire. This, Sire, is the advice of your great American council, on the observance of which may perhaps depend you felicity and future fame, and the preservation of that harmony which alone can continue both to Great Britain and America the reciprocal advantages of their connection. It is neither our wish nor our interest to separate from her. We are willing, on our part, to sacrifice everything which reason can ask to the restoration of that tranquillity for which all must wish. On their part, let them be ready to establish union and a generous plan. Let them name

their terms, but let them be just. Accept of every commercial preference it is in our power to give for such things as we can raise for their use, or they make for ours. But let them not think to exclude us from going to other markets to dispose of those commodities which they cannot use, or to supply those wants which they cannot supply. Still less, let it be proposed that our properties within our own territories shall be taxed or regulated by any power on earth but our own. The God who gave us life gave us liberty at the same time; the hand of force may destroy, but cannot disjoin them. This, Sire, is our last, our determined resolution."]

Virginia was not alone in her sympathy for the inhabitants of Boston, nor in active measures for sustaining the noble cause in which she was engaged. The news of the passage of the Boston Port Bill was received in that town on the 10th of May (1774), and its operation was to commence on the first of the next month. We have already noticed the resolutions of the Boston town meeting of May 13th and its effect on the House of Burgesses of Virginia.

On their reception in South Carolina, a number of the leading citizens of Charleston unanimously agreed to call a meeting of the inhabitants of the whole province.

That this might be as general as possible, letters were sent to every parish and district, and the people were invited to attend, either personally or by their representatives, at a general meeting. A large number assembled, in which were some from almost every part of the province. The proceedings of Parliament against Massachusetts were distinctly related to this convention.

Without one dissenting voice they passed sundry resolutions expressive of their rights and of their sympathy with the people of Boston. They also chose five dele-

gates to represent them in a Continental Congress, and invested them "with full powers and authority, in behalf of them and their constituents, to concert, agree to, and effectually to prosecute such legal measures as in their opinion, and the opinion of the other members, would be most likely to obtain a redress of American grievances."

The events of this time, says Ramsay, may be transmitted to posterity, but the agitation of the public mind can never be fully comprehended, but by those who were witnesses of it.

In the counties and towns of the several provinces, as well as in the cities, the people assembled and passed resolutions expressive of their rights and of their detestation of the late American acts of Parliament. These had an instantaneous effect on the minds of thousands. Not only the young and impetuous, but the aged and temperate, joined in pronouncing them to be unconstitutional and oppressive. They viewed them as deadly weapons aimed at the vitals of that liberty which they adored; as rendering abortive the generous pains taken by their forefathers to procure for them, in a new world, the quiet enjoyment of their rights. They were the subjects of their meditation when alone, and of their conversation when in company.

Within little more than a month, after the news of the Boston Port Bill reached America, it was communicated from State to State, and a flame was kindled in almost every breast through the widely-extended provinces. The committees of correspondence were at work in every part of the country. Every political act of one province became speedily known to every other.

In the first three months which followed the shutting up of the port of Boston, the inhabitants of the Colonies, in hundreds of small circles, as well as in their provincial assemblies and congresses, expressed their abhorrence of the late proceedings of the British Parliament against

Massachusetts — their concurrence in the proposed measure of appointing deputies for a general congress, and their willingness to do and suffer whatever should be judged conducive to the establishment of their liberties.

A patriotic flame, created and diffused by the contagion of sympathy, was communicated to so many breasts and reflected from such a variety of objects as to become too intense to be resisted.

While the combination of the other Colonies to support Boston was gaining strength, new matter of dissension daily took place in Massachusetts. The resolution for shutting the port of Boston was no sooner taken than it was determined to order a military force to that town. General Gage had arrived in Boston on the third day after the inhabitants received the first intelligence of the Boston Port Bill. Though the people were irritated by that measure, and though their republican jealousy was hurt by the combination of the civil and military character in one person, yet the General, as we have seen, was received with all the honors which had been usually paid to his predecessors. Soon after his arrival, two regiments of foot, with a detachment of artillery and some cannon, were landed in Boston. These troops were by degrees reinforced with others from Ireland, New York, Halifax, and Quebec.

The Governor announced that he had the King's particular command for holding the General Court at Salem after the 1st of June. When that eventful day arrived the act for shutting up the port of Boston commenced its operation.

It was devoutly kept at Williamsburg as a day of fasting and humiliation.* In Philadelphia it was solemnized

* Washington writes in his diary that he "went to church and fasted all day."— Sparks.

with every manifestation of public calamity and grief. The inhabitants shut up their houses. After divine service a stillness reigned over the city, which exhibited an appearance of the deepest distress.

In Boston a new scene opened on the inhabitants. Hitherto that town had been the seat of commerce and of plenty. The immense business carried on there afforded a comfortable subsistence to many thousands. The necessary, the useful, and even some of the elegant arts were cultivated among them. The citizens were polite and hospitable. In this happy state they were sentenced, on the short notice of twenty-one days, to a total deprivation of all means of subsisting. The blow reached every person. The rents of the landholders either ceased or were greatly diminished. The immense property in stores and wharves was rendered comparatively useless. Laborers, artificers, and others employed in the numerous occupations created by an extensive trade partook in the general calamity. They who depended on a regular income flowing from previous acquisitions of property, as well as they who, with the sweat of their brow, earned their daily subsistence, were equally deprived of the means of support; and the chief difference between them was that the distresses of the former were rendered more intolerable by the recollection of past enjoyments. All these inconveniences and hardships were borne with a passive but inflexible fortitude. Their determination to persist in the same line of conduct which had been the occasion of their suffering was unabated.

The authors and advisers of the resolution for destroying the tea were in the town and still retained their popularity and influence. The execrations of the inhabitants fell not on them, but on the British Parliament. Their countrymen acquitted them of all selfish designs, and be-

lieved that in their opposition to the measures of Great Britain they were actuated by an honest zeal for constitutional liberty. The sufferers in Boston had the consolation of sympathy from the other colonists. Contributions were raised in all quarters for their relief. Letters and addresses came to them from corporate bodies, town meetings, and provincial conventions, applauding their conduct and exhorting them to perseverance.

The people of Marblehead, who, by their proximity, were likely to reap advantage from the distresses of Boston, generously offered the merchants of that place the use of their harbor, wharves, warehouses, and also their personal attendance on the lading or unlading of their goods, free of all expense.

The inhabitants of Salem, in an address to Governor Gage, concluded with these remarkable words: "By shutting up the port of Boston some imagine that the course of trade might be turned hither and to our benefit; but nature, in the formation of our harbor, forbade our becoming rivals in commerce with that convenient mart; and, were it otherwise, we must be dead to every idea of justice, lost to all feelings of humanity, could we indulge one thought to seize on wealth and raise our fortunes on the ruins of our suffering neighbors."

The Massachusetts General Court met at Salem, according to adjournment, on the 7th of June, 1774. Several of the popular leaders took, in a private way, the sense of the members on what was proper to be done. Finding they were able to carry such measures as the public exigencies required, they prepared resolves and moved for their adoption. But before they went on the latter business their door was shut.

One member nevertheless contrived means of sending information to Governor Gage of what was doing. His

secretary was sent off to dissolve the General Court, but was refused admission. As he could obtain no entrance, he read the proclamation at the door and immediately after in council, and thus dissolved the General Court. The House, while sitting with their doors shut, appointed five of the most respectable inhabitants as delegates to the General Congress, which was to meet on the 1st of September at Philadelphia, voted them £75 sterling each, and recommended to the several towns and districts to raise the said sum by equitable proportions. By these means the designs of the Governor were disappointed. His situation in every respect was truly disagreeable. It was his duty to forward the execution of laws which were universally execrated. Zeal for his master's service prompted him to endeavor that they should be carried into full effect, but his progress was retarded by obstacles from every quarter. He had to transact his official business with a people who possessed a high sense of liberty and were uncommonly ingenious in evading disagreeable acts of Parliament. It was a part of his duty to prevent the calling of the town meetings after the 1st of August, 1774. These meetings were nevertheless held. On his proposing to exert authority for the dispersion of the people, he was told by the selectmen that they had not offended against the act of Parliament, for that only prohibited the calling of town meetings, and that no such call had been made; a former constitutional meeting before the 1st of August having only adjourned themselves from time to time. Other evasions, equally founded on the letter of even the late obnoxious laws, were practiced.

As the summer advanced the people of Massachusetts received stronger proofs of support from the neighboring province. They were therefore encouraged to further opposition. The inhabitants of the Colonies at this time,

with regard to political opinions, might be divided into three classes. Of these, one was for rushing precipitately into extremities. They were for immediately stopping all trade, and could not even brook the delay of waiting till the proposed Continental Congress should meet. Another party, equally respectable both as to character, property, and patriotism, was more moderate, but not less firm. These were averse to the adoption of any violent resolutions till all others were ineffectually tried. They wished that a clear statement of their rights, claims, and grievances should precede every other measure. A third class disapproved of what was generally going on — a few from principle and a persuasion that they ought to submit to the mother country, some from the love of ease, others from self-interest, but the bulk from fear of the mischievous consequences likely to follow. All these latter classes, for the most part, lay still, while the friends of liberty acted with spirit. If they or any of them ventured to oppose popular measures they were not supported, and therefore declined further efforts. The resentment of the people was so strong against them that they sought for peace by remaining quiet. The same indecision that made them willing to submit to Great Britain made them apparently acquiesce in popular measures which they disapproved. The spirited part of the community being on the side of liberty, the patriots had the appearance of unanimity, though many either kept at a distance from public meetings or voted against their own opinion, to secure themselves from resentment and promote their present ease and interest.

Under the influence of those who were for the immediate adoption of efficacious measures, an agreement by the name of the solemn league and covenant was adopted by numbers. The subscribers of this bound themselves

to suspend all commercial intercourse with Great Britain until the late obnoxious laws were repealed and the Colony of Massachusetts restored to its chartered rights.

General Gage published a proclamation in which he styled this solemn league and covenant "An unlawful, hostile, and traitorous combination." And all magistrates were charged to apprehend and secure for trial such as should have any agency in publishing or subscribing the same or any similar covenant. This proclamation had no other effect than to exercise the pens of the lawyers in showing that the association did not come within the description of legal treason, and that therefore the Governor's proclamation was not warranted by the principles of the Constitution.

The late law for regulating the government of the province arrived near the beginning of August, 1774, and was accompanied with a list of thirty-six new councillors appointed by the Crown and in a mode variant from that prescribed by the charter. Several of these in the first instance declined an acceptance of the appointment. Those who accepted of it were everywhere declared to be enemies to their country. The new judges were rendered incapable of proceeding in their official duty. Upon opening the courts the juries refused to be sworn or to act in any manner, either under them or in conformity to the late regulations. In some places the people assembled and filled the courthouses and avenues to them in such a manner that neither the judges nor their officers could obtain entrance; and upon the sheriff's commanding them to make way for the court, they answered: "That they knew no court independent of the ancient laws of their country, and to none other would they submit."

In imitation of his royal master, Governor Gage issued a proclamation "for the encouragement of piety and vir-

tue, and for the prevention and punishing vice, profaneness, and immorality." In this proclamation hypocrisy was inserted as one of the immoralities against which the people were warned. This was considered by the inhabitants, who had often been ridiculed for their strict attention to the forms of religion, to be a studied insult, and as such was more resented than an actual injury. It greatly added to the inflammation which had already taken place in their minds.

The proceedings and apparent dispositions of the people, together with the military preparations which were daily made through the province, induced General Gage to fortify that neck of land which joins the peninsula of Roxbury to Boston.

He also seized upon the powder which was lodged in the arsenal at Charlestown.

This excited a most violent and universal ferment. Several thousands of the people assembled at Cambridge, and it was with difficulty they were restrained from marching directly to Boston to demand a delivery of the powder, with a resolution, in case of refusal, to attack the troops.

The people thus assembled proceeded to Lieutenant-Governor Oliver's house and to the houses of several of the new councillors, and obliged them to resign and to declare that they would no more act under the laws lately enacted. In the confusion of these transactions a rumor went abroad that the royal fleet and troops were firing upon the town of Boston. This was probably designed by the popular leaders on purpose to ascertain what aid they might expect from the country in case of extremities. The result exceeded their most sanguine expectations. In less than twenty-four hours there were upward of 30,000 men in arms and marching toward the capital. Other risings of the people took place in different parts

of the Colony, and their violence was such that in a short time the new councillors, the commissioners of the customs, and all who had taken an active part in favor of Great Britain were obliged to screen themselves in Boston. The new seat of government at Salem was abandoned, and the officers connected with the revenue were obliged to consult their safety by taking up their residence in a place which an act of Parliament had proscribed from all trade.

About this time delegates from every town and district in the county of Suffolk, of which Boston is the county town, had a meeting, at which they prefaced a number of spirited resolutions, containing a detail of the particulars of their intended opposition to the late acts of Parliament, with a general declaration, "That no obedience was due from the province to either or any part of the said acts, but that they should be rejected as the attempts of a wicked administration to enslave America." The resolves of this meeting were sent on to Philadelphia for the information and opinion of the Congress, which, as shall be hereafter related, had met there about this time.

The people of Massachusetts rightly judged that from the decision of Congress on these resolutions they would be enabled to determine what support they might expect. Notwithstanding present appearances, they feared that the other Colonies, who were no more than remotely concerned, would not hazard the consequences of making a common cause with them should subsequent events make it necessary to repel force by force. The decision of Congress exceeded their expectations, as we shall presently see.

CHAPTER X.

WASHINGTON A MEMBER OF CONGRESS.

1774.

THE time had now arrived when Washington was to take a distinguished part in the proceedings of the celebrated Continental Congress of 1774. He was accompanied on his journey from Mount Vernon by two of his colleagues, Patrick Henry and Edmund Pendleton. As they pursued their journey, which was performed on horseback, we may imagine them to have communed with each other on the momentous character of the work upon which they were about to enter. Whether aware of it or not, they were in fact destined that very session of Congress to lay securely the foundations of the American Republic. It was fit and proper that Washington should take a leading part in the deliberations of that remarkable assemblage of illustrious men.*

* The instructions given by the Virginia convention of August 1–6 to the delegates to the Congress of 1774 were as follows:

"The unhappy disputes between Great Britain and her American Colonies, which began about the third year of the reign of his present majesty, and since continually increasing, have proceeded to lengths so dangerous and alarming as to excite just apprehensions in the minds of His Majesty's faithful subjects of the Colony that they are in danger of being deprived of their natural, ancient, constitutional, and chartered rights, have compelled them to take the same into their most serious consideration; and being deprived of their usual and accustomed mode of making known their grievances, have appointed us their representatives, to consider what is proper to be done in this dangerous crisis of American

The day appointed for the opening of Congress was the 5th of September, 1774. The place of this meeting was Carpenter's Hall in Carpenter's Court, Chestnut street, Philadelphia. Punctual to the hour, the deputies from eleven provinces presented themselves, and shortly after, by the arrival of the delegates from North Carolina, there was a complete representation of all the thirteen Colonies,

affairs. It being our opinion that the united wisdom of North America should be collected in a general congress of all the Colonies, we have appointed the Hon. Peyton Randolph, Richard Henry Lee, George Washington, Patrick Henry, Richard Bland, Benjamin Harrison, and Edmund Pendleton, Esqs., deputies to represent this Colony in the said Congress, to be held at Philadelphia on the first Monday in September next. And that they may be the better informed of our sentiments touching the conduct we wish them to observe on this important occasion, we desire that they will express, in the first place, our faith and true allegiance to His Majesty, King George III, our lawful and rightful sovereign; and that we are determined, with our lives and fortunes, to support him in the legal exercise of all his just rights and prerogatives. And, however misrepresented, we sincerely approve of a constitutional connection with Great Britain and wish most ardently a return of affection and commercial connection that formerly united both countries, which can only be effected by a removal of those causes of discontent which have of late unhappily divided us.

"It cannot admit of a doubt but that British subjects in America are entitled to the same rights and privileges as their fellow-subjects possess in Britain, and therefore that the power assumed by the British Parliament to bind America by their statutes, in all cases whatsoever, is unconstitutional and the source of these unhappy differences.

"The end of government would be defeated by the British Parliament exercising a power over the lives, the property, and the liberty of American subjects who are not, and from their local circumstances cannot, be there represented. Of this nature we consider the several acts of Parliament for raising a revenue in America, for extending the jurisdiction of the courts of admiralty, for seizing American subjects and transporting them to Britain

Georgia alone excepted. The whole number of delegates was fifty-four.

Congress was organized by the choice of Peyton Randolph, of Virginia, as president, and Charles Thomson, of Pennsylvania, as secretary. The credentials of the various delegates were then presented.

In respect to the number of their delegates, the Colonies were unequally represented; and as their relative importance was not accurately known, it was arranged that the

to be tried for crimes committed in America, and the several late oppressive acts concerning the town of Boston and province of Massachusetts Bay.

"The original Constitution of the American Colonies possessing their Assemblies with the sole right of directing their internal polity, it is absolutely destructive of the end of their institution that their Legislatures should be suspended, or prevented by hasty dissolutions, from exercising their legislative powers.

"Wanting the protection of Britain, we have long acquiesced in their acts of navigation, restrictive of our commerce, which we consider as an ample recompense for such protection; but as those acts derive their efficacy from that foundation alone, we have reason to expect they will be restrained so as to produce the reasonable purposes of Britain and not be injurious to us.

"To obtain redress of these grievances, without which the people of America can neither be safe, free, nor happy, they are willing to undergo the great inconvenience that will be derived to them from stopping all imports whatsoever from Great Britain, after the 1st day of November next, and also to cease exporting any commodity whatsoever to the same place after the 10th day of August, 1775. The earnest desire we have to make as quick and full payment as possible of our debts to Great Britain, and to avoid the heavy injury that would arise to this country from an earlier adoption of the nonexportation plan, after the people have already applied so much of their labor to the perfecting of their present crop, by which means they have been prevented from pursuing other methods of clothing and supporting their families, have rendered it necessary to restrain you in this article of nonexportation; but it is our desire that you cordially co-

representatives of each province should give one single vote upon every question discussed by the Congress. It was further determined that the meetings of the Congress should be held with closed doors, and that not a syllable of its transactions should be published except by order of a majority of the Colonies. This judicious regulation, among other advantageous results, withheld from public view every symptom of doubt or divided purpose and opinion among the members of the Congress. What we know

operate with our sister Colonies in general Congress in such other just and proper methods as they, or the majority, shall deem necessary for the accomplishment of these valuable ends.

"The proclamation issued by General Gage in the government of the province of Massachusetts Bay, declaring it treason for the inhabitants of that province to assemble themselves to consider of their grievances, and form associations for their common conduct on the occasion, and requiring the civil magistrates and officers to apprehend all such persons to be tried for their supposed offenses, is the most alarming process that ever appeared in a British Government; the said General Gage has thereby assumed and taken upon himself powers denied by the Constitution to our legal sovereign, he not having condescended to disclose by what authority he exercises such extensive and unheard-of powers, we are at a loss to determine whether he intends to justify himself as the representative of the King, or as the Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's forces in America. If he considers himself as acting in the character of His Majesty's representative, we would remind him that the statute 25, Edward III, has expressed and defined all treasonable offenses, and that the Legislature of Great Britain hath declared that no offense shall be construed to be treason but such as is pointed out by that statute; and that this was done to take out of the hands of tyrannical kings and of weak and wicked ministers that deadly weapon which constructive treason hath furnished them with, and which had drawn the blood of the best and honestest men in the kingdom; and that the King of Great Britain hath no right by his proclamation to subject his people to imprisonment, pains, and penalties.

"That if the said General Gage conceives he is empowered to

of the details of its proceedings is sufficiently meager and scanty. It has been gathered from the testimony of those who were present, communicated long after in conversation and in letters.

Of the whole number of deputies which formed the Continental Congress of 1774, one-half were lawyers. Gentlemen of that profession had acquired the confidence of the inhabitants by their exertions in the common cause. The previous measures in the respective provinces had been planned and carried into effect more by lawyers than by any other order of men. Professionally taught the rights of the people, they were among the foremost to descry every attack made on their liberties. Bred in the habits of public speaking, they made a distinguished figure in the meetings of the people, and were particularly able to explain to them the tendency of the late acts of Parliament. Exerting their abilities and influence in the cause of their country, they were rewarded with its confidence.

The most eminent men of the various Colonies were now for the first time brought together. They were known to each other by fame, but they were personally strangers. The meeting was awfully solemn. The object which had called them together was of incalculable magnitude. The liberties of no less than 3,000,000 people, with that of all their posterity, were staked on the wisdom and energy of their councils. No wonder then at the long and deep silence which is said to have followed upon their organiza-

act in this manner, as the Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's forces in America, this odious and illegal proclamation must be considered as a full and plain declaration that this despotic viceroy will be bound by no law, nor regard the constitutional rights of His Majesty's subjects whenever they interfere with the plan he has formed for oppressing the good people of Massachusetts Bay, and therefore that the executing, or attempting to execute, such proclamation will justify resistance and reprisal."

tion; at the anxiety with which the members looked around upon each other; and the reluctance which every individual felt to open a business so fearfully momentous.

In the midst of this deep and death-like silence and just when it was beginning to become painfully embarrassing, Patrick Henry arose slowly, as if borne down with the weight of the subject. After faltering, according to his habit, through a most impressive exordium, in which he merely echoed back the consciousness of every other heart, in deploring his inability to do justice to the occasion, he launched gradually into recital of the colonial wrongs. Rising, as he advanced, with the grandeur of his subject, and glowing at length with all the majesty and expectation of the occasion, his speech seemed more than that of mortal man. Even those who had heard him in all his glory in the House of Burgesses of Virginia were astonished at the manner in which his talents seemed to swell and expand themselves to fill the vaster theater in which he was now placed. There was no rant, no rhapsody, no labor of the understanding, no straining of the voice, no confusion of the utterance. His countenance was erect, his eye steady, his action noble, his enunciation clear and firm, his mind poised on its center, his views of his subject comprehensive and great, and his imagination coruscating with a magnificence and a variety which struck even that assembly with amazement and awe. He sat down amidst murmurs of astonishment and applause, and as he had been before proclaimed the greatest orator of Virginia, he was now, on every hand, admitted to be the first orator of America.*

* [Henry himself declared, in one of his most notable utterances, that of the members of the Congress, "If you speak of eloquence, Mr. Rutledge of South Carolina is by far the greatest orator." The eminent jurist, John Rutledge, who rose to eminence as a lawyer while still a young man, was a member of the Congress; so,

He was followed by Richard Henry Lee, who charmed the House with a different kind of eloquence, chaste, classical, beautiful, his polished periods rolling along without effort, filling the ear with the most bewitching harmony, and delighting the mind with the most exquisite imagery. The cultivated graces of Lee's rhetoric received and at the same time reflected beauty by their contrast with the wild and grand effusions of Henry, just as those noble monuments of art which lie scattered through the celebrated landscape of Naples at once adorn and are in their turn adorned by the surrounding majesty of nature.

Two models of eloquence, each so perfect in its kind and so finely contrasted, could not but fill the House with the highest admiration; and as Henry had before been proclaimed the Demosthenes, it was conceded on every hand that Lee was the Cicero, of America.

It is due however to historic truth to record that the superior powers of these great men were manifested only in debate. On the floor of the House and during the first days of the session, while general grievances were the topic, they took the undisputed lead in the assembly and were confessedly *primi inter pares.* But when called down from the heights of declamation to that severer test of intellectual excellence, the details of business, they found themselves in a body of cool-headed, reflecting, and most able men, by whom they were, in their turn, completely thrown into the shade.

A petition to the King, an address to the people of Great Britain, and a memorial to the people of British America were agreed to be drawn. Mr. Lee, Mr. Henry,

also, was his son, Edward Rutledge, who had been admitted to practice at the Charleston bar in 1773, and in the Congress (from 1774 to 1777) was eminent as a debater and was one of the signers of the Declaration.]

and others were appointed for the first; Mr. Lee, Mr. Livingston, and Mr. Jay for the two last. The splendor of their *debut* occasioned Mr. Henry to be designated by his committee to draw the petition to the King with which they were charged, and Mr. Lee was charged with the address to the people of England. The last was first reported. On reading it great disappointment was expressed in every countenance and a dead silence ensued for some minutes. At length it was laid on the table for perusal and consideration till the next day, when first one member and then another arose and, paying some faint compliment to the composition, observed that there were still certain considerations, not expressed, which should properly find a place in it. The address was therefore committed for amendment; and one presented by Mr. Jay and offered by Governor Livingston was reported and adopted with scarcely an alteration. These facts are stated by a gentleman, to whom they were communicated by Mr. Pendleton and Mr. Harrison, of the Virginia delegation (except that Mr. Harrison erroneously ascribed the draft to Governor Livingston), and to whom they were afterward confirmed by Governor Livingston himself. Mr. Henry's draft of a petition to the King was equally unsuccessful, and was recommitted for amendment. Mr. John Dickinson (the author of the "Farmer's Letters") was added to the committee, and a new draft prepared by him was adopted.*

In connecting these proceedings with the opening speeches of Henry and Lee, we have passed over a char-

*[History has not adequately noted the fact that Patrick Henry and Richard Henry Lee, brilliant orators and ardent patriots though they were, came very much short of able statesmanship, both in the Continental Congress and in the great crisis of American development when they bitterly opposed the adoption of the Constitution.]

SURRENDER OF COLONEL RAHL AT THE BATTLE OF TRENTON.

acteristic incident which took place on the first day of the session.

"When the Congress met," writes John Adams to his wife, "Mr. Cushing made a motion that it should be opened with prayer. It was opposed by Mr. Jay, of New York, and Mr. Rutledge, of South Carolina, because we were so divided in religious sentiments — some Episcopalians, some Quakers, some Anabaptists, some Presbyterians, and some Congregationalists — that we could not join in the same act of worship. Mr. Samuel Adams arose and said, 'that he was no bigot, and could hear a prayer from any gentleman of piety and virtue, who was at the same time a friend to his country. He was a stranger in Philadelphia, but had heard that Mr. Duché deserved that character, and therefore he moved that Mr. Duché, an Episcopal clergyman, might be desired to read prayers before the Congress to-morrow morning.' The motion was seconded and passed in the affirmative. Mr. Randolph, our president, waited on Mr. Duché, and received for answer that if his health would permit he certainly would. Accordingly, next morning, he appeared with his clerk and in pontificals, and read several prayers in the established form, and then read the Psalter for the 7th day of September, a part of which was the Thirty-fifth Psalm. You must remember this was the next morning after we heard the rumor of the horrible cannonade of Boston. It seemed as if heaven had ordained that Psalm to be read on that morning.

"After this, Mr. Duché, unexpectedly to everybody, struck out into an extemporary prayer, which filled the bosom of every man present. I must confess I never heard a better prayer or one so well pronounced. Episcopalian as he is, Dr. Cooper himself never prayed with such fervor, such ardor, such correctness, such pathos, and in

language so elegant and sublime, for Congress, for the province of Massachusetts Bay, especially the town of Boston. It had an excellent effect upon everybody here. I must beg you to read that Psalm. If there is any faith in the Sortes Virgillianæ, or Sortes Homericæ, or especially the Sortes Biblicæ, it would be thought providential."

Bishop White, who was present, says that Washington was *the only member who knelt on that occasion.**

Congress, soon after their meeting, agreed upon a declaration of rights, by which it was among other things declared that the inhabitants of the English Colonies in North America, by the immutable laws of nature, the principles of the English Constitution, and the several charters or compacts were entitled to life, liberty, and property; and that they had never ceded to any sovereign power whatever a right to dispose of either, without their consent. That their ancestors, who first settled the Colonies, were entitled to all the rights, liberties, and immunities of free and natural-born subjects within the realm of England, and that by their migrating to America they by no means forfeited, surrendered, or lost any of those rights; that the foundation of English liberty and of all free government was a right in the people to participate in their legislative councils, and that as the English colonists were

* Mr. Duché, at the time of the first Congress, was an ardent Whig, but afterward left the patriotic cause. When the British took possession of Philadelphia, Mr. Duché, alarmed, forsook the American cause and wrote an ardent letter to Washington, endeavoring to persuade him to do the same. Washington immediately transmitted this letter to Congress, and Duché was obliged to leave America. In 1790 he returned to America, and in 1794 died in Philadelphia, when about sixty years of age. His wife was a sister of Francis Hopkinson, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. He was buried at St. Peter's Church, in Third street, Philadelphia, and a tablet to his memory may still be seen inserted in the wall of the building.

not and could not be properly represented in the British Parliament, they were entitled to a free and exclusive power of legislation in their several provincial Legislatures, in all cases of taxation and internal polity, subject only to the negative of their sovereign. They then run the line between the supremacy of Parliament and the independency of the colonial Legislatures, by provisos and restrictions expressed in the following words: "But from the necessity of the case, and a regard to the mutual interests of both countries, we cheerfully consent to the operation of such acts of the British Parliament as are *bona fide* restrained to the regulation of our external commerce, for the purpose of securing the commercial advantages of the whole empire to the mother country, and the commercial benefits of its respective members, excluding every idea of taxation, internal and external, for raising a revenue on the subjects in America without their consent."

This was the very hinge of the controversy. The absolute, unlimited supremacy of the British Parliament, both in legislation and taxation, was contended for on one side; while on the other, no further authority was conceded than such a limited legislation, with regard to external commerce, as would combine the interests of the whole empire. In government as well as in religion there are mysteries, from the close investigation of which little advantage can be expected. From the unity of the empire it was necessary that some acts should extend over the whole. From the local situation of the Colonies, it was equally reasonable that their Legislatures should at least, in some matters, be independent. Where the supremacy of the first ended and the independency of the last began was to the best informed a puzzling question.

Congress also resolved that the colonists were entitled to the common law of England, and more especially to the

privilege of being tried by their peers of the vicinage; that they were entitled to the benefit of such of the English statutes as existed at the time of their colonization, and which they had found to be applicable to their local circumstances, and also to the immunities and privileges granted and confirmed to them by royal charters or secured by provincial laws; that they had a right peaceably to assemble, consider of their grievances, and petition the King; that the keeping a standing army in the Colonies, without the consent of the Legislature of the Colony where the army was kept, was against law. That it was indispensably necessary to good government, and rendered essential by the English Constitution, that the constituent branches of the Legislature be independent of each other, and that therefore the exercise of legislative power in several Colonies by a council appointed during pleasure by the Crown was unconstitutional, dangerous, and destructive to the freedom of American legislation. All of these liberties, Congress, in behalf of themselves and their constituents, claimed, demanded, and insisted upon as their indubitable rights, which could not be legally taken from them, altered, or abridged by any power whatever without their consent. Congress then resolved that sundry acts, which had been passed in the reign of George III, were infringements and violations of the rights of the colonists, and that the repeal of them was essentially necessary in order to restore harmony between Great Britain and the Colonies. The acts complained of were as follows: The several acts which imposed duties for the purpose of raising a revenue in America; extended the power of the Admiralty Courts beyond their ancient limits; deprived the American subject of trial by jury; authorized the judge's certificate to indemnify the prosecutor from damages that he might otherwise be liable to; requiring

oppressive security from a claimant of ships and goods seized before he was allowed to defend his property.

Also "An act for the better securing His Majesty's dock-yards, magazines, ships, ammunition, and stores," which declares a new offense in America, and deprives the American subject of a constitutional trial by jury of the vicinage, by authorizing the trial of any person charged with the committing any offense described in the said act out of the realm to be indicted and tried for the same in any shire or county within the realm.

Also the three acts passed in the last session of Parliament for stopping the port and blocking up the harbor of Boston; for altering the charter and government of Massachusetts Bay; and that which is entitled, "An act for the better administration of justice," etc.

Also the act passed in the same session, for establishing the Roman Catholic religion in the province of Quebec, abolishing the equitable system of English laws, and erecting a tyranny there to the great danger (from so total a dissimilarity of religion, law, and government) of the neighboring British Colonies, by the assistance of whose blood and treasure the said country had been conquered from France.

Also the act passed in the same session, for the better providing suitable quarters for officers and soldiers in His Majesty's service in North America.

Also, that the keeping a standing army in several of these Colonies in time of peace, without the consent of the Legislature of that Colony in which such army was kept, was against law.

Congress declared that they could not submit to these grievous acts and measures. In hopes that their fellow-subjects in Great Britain would restore the Colonies to that state in which both countries found happiness and

prosperity, they resolved for the present only to pursue the following peaceable measures: 1. To enter into a non-importation, nonconsumption, and nonexportation agreement or association. 2. To prepare an address to the people of Great Britain, and a memorial to the inhabitants of British America. 3. To prepare a loyal address to His Majesty.

By the association they bound themselves and their constituents, "from and after the 1st day of December next (1774), not to import into British America, from Great Britain or Ireland, any goods, wares, or merchandise whatsoever; not to purchase any slave imported after the said 1st day of December; not to purchase or use any tea imported on account of the East India Company, or any on which a duty hath been or shall be paid; and from and after the first day of the next ensuing March, neither to purchase or use any East India tea whatever. That they would not, after the 10th day of the next September, if their grievances were not previously redressed, export any commodity whatsoever to Great Britain, Ireland, or the West Indies, except rice to Europe. That the merchants should, as soon as possible, write to their correspondents in Great Britain and Ireland, not to ship any goods to them on any pretense whatever; and if any merchant there should ship any goods for America in order to contravene the nonimportation agreement, they would not afterward have any commercial connection with such merchant; that such as were owners of vessels should give positive orders to their captains and masters not to receive on board their vessels any goods prohibited by the said nonimportation agreement; that they would use their endeavors to improve the breed of sheep and increase their numbers to the greatest extent; that they would encourage frugality, economy, and industry, and promote

agriculture, arts, and American manufactures; that they would discountenance and discourage every species of extravagance and dissipation, and that on the death of relations or friends, they would wear no other mourning than a small piece of black crape or ribbon; that such as were venders of goods should not take any advantage of the scarcity so as to raise their prices; that if any person should import goods after the 1st day of December, and before the 1st day of February then next ensuing, the same ought to be immediately reshipped or delivered up to a committee to be stored or sold; in the last case, all the clear profits to be applied toward the relief of the inhabitants of Boston; and that if any goods should be imported after the 1st day of February then next ensuing, they should be sent back without breaking any of the packages; that committees be chosen in every county, city, and town to observe the conduct of all persons touching the Association, and to publish in gazettes the names of the violators of it, as foes to the rights of British America; that the committees of correspondence in the respective Colonies frequently inspect the entries of their custom-houses, and inform each other from time to time of the true state thereof; that all manufactures of America should be sold at reasonable prices, and no advantages to be taken of a future scarcity of goods; and lastly, that they would have no dealings or intercourse whatever with any province or Colony of North America, which should not accede to or should violate the aforesaid Associations." These several resolutions they bound themselves and their constituents, by the sacred ties of virtue, honor, and love of their country, to observe till their grievances were redressed.

In their address* to the people of Great Britain, they complimented them for having at every hazard maintained

* This address was written by John Jay.

their independence, and transmitted the rights of man and the blessings of liberty to their posterity, and requested them not to be surprised, that they who were descended from the same common ancestors should refuse to surrender their rights, liberties, and Constitution. They proceeded to state their rights and grievances, and to vindicate themselves of the charges of being seditious, impatient of government, and desirous of independency. They summed up their wishes in the following words: "Place us in the same situation that we were at the close of the last war, and our former harmony will be restored."

In the memorial* of Congress to the inhabitants of the British Colonies, they recapitulated the proceedings of Great Britain against them since the year 1763, in order to impress them with a belief that a deliberate system was formed for abridging their liberties. They then proceeded to state the measures they had adopted to counteract this system, and gave the reasons which induced them to adopt the same. They encouraged them to submit to the inconveniences of nonimportation and nonexportation, by desiring them "to weigh in the opposite balance the endless miseries they and their descendants must endure from an established arbitrary power." They concluded with informing them, "that the schemes agitated against the Colonies had been so conducted as to render it prudent to extend their views to mournful events, and to be in all respects prepared for every contingency."

In the petition of Congress to the King, they begged leave to lay their grievances before the throne. After a particular enumeration of these, they observed that they wholly arose from a destructive system of colonial administration, adopted since the conclusion of the last war. They assured His Majesty that they had made such provision

* This paper was the composition of Richard Henry Lee.

for defraying the charges of the administration of justice, and the support of civil government as had been judged just and suitable to their respective circumstances; and that for the defense, protection, and security of the Colonies their militia would be fully sufficient in time of peace, and in case of war they were ready and willing, when constitutionally required, to exert their most strenuous efforts in granting supplies and raising forces. They said, "We ask but for peace, liberty, and safety. We wish not a diminution of the prerogative, nor do we solicit the grant of any new right in our favor. Your royal authority over us, and our connection with Great Britain, we shall always carefully and zealously endeavor to support and maintain." They then solicited for a redress of their grievances, which they had enumerated, and appealing to that Being who searches thoroughly the hearts of his creatures, they solemnly professed "that their councils had been influenced by no other motives that a dread of impending destruction." They concluded with imploring His Majesty, "for the honor of Almighty God, for his own glory, for the interests of his family, for the safety of his kingdom and dominions, that as the loving father of his whole people, connected by the same bonds of law, loyalty, faith, and blood, though dwelling in various countries, he would not suffer the transcendent relation formed by these ties to be further violated by uncertain expectation of effects, that if attained never could compensate for the calamities through which they must be gained."

The Congress also addressed the French inhabitants of Canada. In this they stated the right they had, on becoming English subjects, to the benefit of the English Constitution. They explained what these rights were, and pointed out the difference between the Constitution imposed on them by act of Parliament, and that to which as British

subjects they were entitled. They introduced their countryman, Montesquieu, as reprobating their parliamentary constitution, and exhorting them to join their fellow colonists in support of their common rights. They earnestly invited them to join with the other Colonies in one social compact, formed on the generous principles of equal liberty, and to this end recommended that they would choose delegates to represent them in Congress.

All these addresses were written with uncommon ability. Coming from the heart, they were calculated to move it. Inspired by a love of liberty, and roused by a sense of common danger, the patriots of that day spoke, wrote, and acted with an animation unknown in times of public tranquillity; but it was not so much on the probable effect of these addresses that Congress founded their hopes of obtaining a redress of their grievances, as on the consequences which they expected from the operation of their nonimportation and nonexportation agreement. The success that had followed the adoption of a measure similar to the former, in two preceding instances, had encouraged the colonists to expect much from a repetition of it. They indulged in extravagant opinions of the importance of their trade to Great Britain. The measure of a nonexportation of their commodities was a new expedient, and from that even more was expected than from the nonimportation agreement. They supposed that it would produce such extensive distress among the merchants and manufacturers of Great Britain, and especially among the inhabitants of the British West India Islands, as would induce their general co-operation in procuring a redress of American grievances. Events proved that young nations, like young people, are prone to overrate their own importance.

Congress having finished all this important business in fifty-one days dissolved themselves, after giving their

opinion, "that another Congress should be held on the 10th of May next ensuing, at Philadelphia, unless the redress of their grievances should be previously obtained," and recommending to all the Colonies to choose deputies as soon as possible, to be ready to attend at that time and place, should events make their meeting necessary.

In a speech delivered in the House of Lords in the ensuing January, the great Earl of Chatham thus spoke of the Continental Congress of 1774, and thus defends the position which it had assumed:

"When your lordships look at the papers transmitted us from America; when you consider their decency, firmness, and wisdom, you cannot but respect their cause and wish to make it your own. For myself, I must declare and avow, that in all my reading and observation — and it has been my favorite study — I have read Thucydides, and have studied and admired the master states of the world — that for solidity of reasoning, force of sagacity, and wisdom of conclusion, under such a complication of difficult circumstances, no nation, or body of men, can stand in preference to the General Congress at Philadelphia. I trust it is obvious to your lordships, that all attempts to impose servitude on such men, to establish deposition over such a mighty continental nation, must be vain, must be fatal. We shall be forced, ultimately, to retract; let us retract while we can, not when we must.

I say we must necessarily undo these violent, oppressive acts; they must be repealed — you will repeal them; I pledge myself for it, that you will in the end repeal them; I stake my reputation on it — I will consent to be taken for an idiot, if they are not finally repealed. Avoid, then, this humiliating, disgraceful necessity. With a dignity becoming your exalted situation, make the first advances to concord, to peace, and happiness; for that is your true

dignity, to act with prudence and justice. That *you* should first concede is obvious from sound and rational policy. Concession comes with better grace and more salutary effect from superior power. It reconciles superiority of power with the feelings of men, and establishes solid confidence on the foundations of affection and gratitude.

So thought a wise poet and a wise man in political sagacity, the friend of Mæcenas, and the eulogist of Augustus. To him the adopted son and successor of the first Cæsar; to him, the master of the world, he wisely urged this conduct of prudence and dignity: '*Tuque prior, tu parce; projice tela manu.*'

Every motive therefore of justice and of policy, of dignity and of prudence, urges you to allay the ferment in America, by a removal of your troops from Boston, by a repeal of your acts of Parliament, and by demonstrations of amicable dispositions toward your Colonies. On the other hand, every danger and every hazard impend to deter you from perseverance in your present ruinous measure. Foreign war hanging over your heads by a slight and brittle thread. France and Spain watching your conduct and waiting for the maturity of your errors, with a vigilant eye to America, and the temper of your Colonies, more than to their own concerns, be they what they may.

To conclude, my lords, if the ministers thus persevere in misadvising and misleading the King, I will not say that they can alienate the affections of his subjects from his crown, but I will affirm, *that they will make the crown not worth his wearing*. I will not say that the King is betrayed; but I will pronounce *that the kingdom is undone*."

Of the speeches of Washington in the Congress of 1774, we have no reports, in consequence of the sessions being held with closed doors, and an injuction of secrecy being

laid on the members; but of the active and decided part which he took in its proceedings, the following anecdote from the life of Patrick Henry affords the most decisive evidence.

Congress arose in October, 1774, and Mr. Henry returned to his native county. Here, as was natural, he was surrounded by his neighbors, who were eager to hear not only what had been done, but what kind of men had composed that illustrious body. He answered their inquiries with all his wonted kindness and candor; and having been asked by one of them "whom he thought the greatest man in Congress?" he replied: "If you speak of eloquence, Mr. Rutledge of South Carolina is by far the greatest orator; but if you speak of solid information and sound judgment, Colonel Washington was unquestionably the greatest man on that floor."

"This opinion," says Mr. Sparks, "was verified by every act of his life. His knowledge on the subject to which he gave his attention was most thorough and exact; and all the world has agreed that no other man has given such proofs of the soundness of his judgment."

Washington had a personal friend, Capt. Robert Mackenzie, who had served under him in the French War, and during the session of Congress was holding a commission in the regular army of Great Britain, and engaged in actual service under General Gage at Boston. From this place he wrote to Washington, expressing very decided tory sentiments, accusing the people of Massachusetts of aiming at independence, and condemning their proceedings in detail, while he expressed the conviction that Gage would speedily subdue them.

The following reply to Mackenzie's letter shows that Washington, at that time, sincerely held the opinions, and

felt the desire expressed by Congress, for a reconciliation to the mother country on just and honorable terms.

"Permit me," he writes, "the freedom of a friend (for you know I always esteemed you) to express my sorrow, that fortune should place you in *a service that must fix curses to the latest posterity upon the contrivers*, and if success (which by the by, is impossible) accompanies it, execrations upon all those who have been instrumental in the execution. I do not mean by this to insinuate that an officer is not to discharge his duty, even when chance, not choice, has placed him in a disagreeable situation; but I conceive, when you condemn the conduct of the Massachusetts people, you reason from effects, not causes; otherwise you would not wonder at a people who are every day receiving fresh proofs of a systematic assertion of an arbitrary power deeply planned to overturn the law and Constitution of their country, and to violate the most essential and valuable rights of mankind, being irritated, and with difficulty restrained, from acts of the greatest violence and intemperance. For my own part, I confess to you candidly, that I view things in a very different point of light from the one in which you seem to consider them; and though you are led to believe by venal men — for such I must take the liberty of calling these new-fangled counselors who fly to and surround you, and all others, who for honors and pecuniary gratifications will lend their aid to overturn the Constitution, and introduce a system of arbitrary government — although you are taught, I say, by discoursing with such men, to believe that the people of Massachusetts are rebellious, setting up for independency, and what not, give me leave, my good friend, to tell you that you are abused, grossly abused. This I advance with a degree of confidence and boldness, which may claim your belief, having better opportunities of knowing the real sentiments

of the people you are among, from the leaders of them, in opposition to the present measures of the administration, than you have from those whose business it is not to disclose truths, but to misinterpret facts, in order to justify as much as possible to the world their own conduct. Give me leave to add, and I think I can announce it as a fact, that it is not the wish or interest of that government, or any other upon this continent, separately or collectively, to set up for independence; but this you may at the same time rely on, that none of them will ever submit to the loss of those valuable rights and privileges which are essential to the happiness of every free State, and without which, life, liberty, and property are rendered totally insecure.

"These, sir, being certain consequences, which must naturally result from the late acts of Parliament relative to America in general, and the government of Massachusetts Bay in particular, is it to be wondered at, I repeat, that men who wish to avert the impending blow should attempt to oppose it in its progress, or prepare for their defense if it cannot be averted? Surely I may be allowed to answer in the negative; and again give me leave to add as my opinion, that *more blood will be spilled on this occasion, if the ministry are determined to push matters to extremity, than history has ever yet furnished instances of in the annals of North America, and such a vital wound will be given to the peace of this great country, as time itself cannot cure or eradicate the remembrance of.*

"But I have done. I was involuntarily led into a short discussion of this subject by your remarks on the conduct of the Boston people, and your opinion of their wishes to set up for independency. I am well satisfied that no such thing is desired by any thinking man in all North America; on the contrary, that it is the ardent wish of the warm-

est advocates for liberty, that peace and tranquillity, upon constitutional grounds, may be restored, and the horrors of civil discord prevented."

This letter of Washington to Captain Mackenzie is very significant. It shows that the determination to push matters to extremes and bring about a declaration of independence was not his aim or expectation at that time; and it leaves us no room to doubt that the Congress itself was sincere, in its expressions of loyalty, throughout those able State papers so warmly commended by Chatham. It is true that Samuel Adams, John Adams, and others were secretly aiming at national independence even at an earlier period; but it is equally true that they clearly perceived by the movements of the leaders in Congress that the time had not yet arrived for them to speak out.

[A striking indication of the attitude assumed toward England by Washington appears in the frequent reference which he made to English injustice toward America, as representing only the ministry through whom the measures of the King's government were put in execution. The general feeling toward England was still that of recognition of a mother and of home, and great pains was taken to have it appear that the Colonies did not wish a quarrel with England, and that they considered themselves harshly dealt with by a ministry which, in its very harshness, wholly failed to be really English. In Virginia especially the sending of sons to England for some part of their education; the return also of some member of a large family connection to residence in England; and visiting for a season or a year or two with English friends, had kept up the tradition of close attachment to the Old Home across the Atlantic. It was therefore with strong sense of the propriety of distinguishing between England itself and the ministry then in power, that Washington set the example

of pointedly designating as ministerial all the British operations against America.

It was to "ministerial oppression" that Washington referred Colonial troubles, when he took command of the forces gathered at Cambridge; the British forces he designated as "ministerial troops;" of Massachusetts he said that allowances must be made in the matter of raising troops, "the yoke of ministerial oppression has been laid so heavily on it;" he gave orders "not to enlist any deserter from the ministerial army;" he reported "the loss of the ministerial troops" in the British attacks on Breed's Hill; in urging General Thomas not to quit the service, it was that he ought not to leave his country "a prey to a cruel and perfidious ministry;" "the ministry," he said, "will never agree to relinquish the dispute unless compelled to;" writing to Schuyler, July 28, 1775, he says that "happily the ministerial troops have not availed themselves of their advantages;" when the news of the British hard fight for Breed's Hill reached England "the ministry affected to treat it as a fiction;" August 8th he speaks of having "heard that the distresses of the ministerial troops for fresh provisions and many other necessaries at Boston were very great;" and two days later he writes to Congress, that "we have great reason to suspect a part or the whole of the ministerial troops are about to remove;" August 20th, he writes to Schuyler of the chance that "the ministerial agents would engage the Indians in hostilities;" on the same day a letter to Gage declined to raise the question of "British or American mercy," said that "your officers and soldiers have been treated with a tenderness due to fellow citizens and brethren," and referred to "the ministerial views, which precipited the present crisis;" September 6, 1775, in a letter to the people of Bermuda, touching "the great conflict which agitates this continent,"

he said that "the violence and rapacity of a tyrannic ministry have forced the citizens of America, your brother Colonists, into arms;" September 10th he writes, that "unless the ministerial troops in Boston are waiting for reinforcements, I cannot devise what they are staying there for, nor why, as they affect to despise the Americans, they do not come forth and put an end to the contest at once;" the same letter refers to his dispatching Arnold with a small army to Canada, to interfere with "the ministry's plan" there; September 14th he refers in the letter to Arnold, to "this unhappy contest between Great Britain and America;" and in the address to the people of Canada he again says "this unnatural contest between the English Colonies and Great Britain;" September 26th he refers to "the ministerial officers," as "the voluntary instruments of an avaricious and vindictive ministry;" October 4th he writes to Schuyler, upon news from England, that "there does not seem the least probability of a change of measures or of ministers;" and the next day to Congress, that "there seems to be no prospect of an accommodation, but the ministry determined to push the war to the utmost;" October 13th he writes to his brother, John Augustine, that "a plenty of arms, and unanimity and fortitude among ourselves, must defeat every attempt that a diabolical ministry can invent to enslave this great continent;" and further says, if Arnold does get Quebec, "what a pretty hand the ministry have made of their Canada bill;" October 24th, it is to "ministerial vengeance," that he refers the "desolation and misery" brought upon Falmouth, by "despotic barbarity."]

On the publication of the proceedings of Congress, the people obtained that information which they desired. Zealous to do something for their country, they patiently waited for the decision of that body, to whose direction

they had resigned themselves. Their determinations were no sooner known, than they were cheerfully obeyed. Though their power was only advisory, yet their recommendations were more generally and more effectually carried into execution, than the laws of the best regulated States. Every individual felt his liberties endangered, and was impressed with an idea that his safety consisted in union. A common interest in warding off a common danger proved a powerful incentive to the most implicit submission. Provincial Congresses and subordinate committees were everywhere instituted. The resolutions of the Continental Congress were sanctioned with the universal approbation of these new representative bodies, and institutions were formed under their direction to carry them into effect.

The regular constitutional Assemblies also gave their assent to the measures recommended. *The Assembly of New York was the only Legislature which withheld its approbation.* Their metropolis had long been the headquarters of the British army in the Colonies, and many of their best families were connected with people of influence in Great Britain. The unequal distribution of their land fostered an aristocratic spirit. From the operation of these and other causes, *the party for royal government was both more numerous and respectable in New York than in any of the other Colonies.*

The Assembly of Pennsylvania, though composed of a majority of Quakers, or of those who were friendly to their interest, was the first legal body of representatives that ratified unanimously the acts of the General Congress. They not only voted their approbation of what that body had done, but appointed members to represent them in the new Congress, proposed to be held on the 10th day of

May next ensuing (1775), and took sundry steps to put the province in a posture of defense.

To relieve the distresses of the people of Boston, liberal collections were made throughout the Colonies, and forwarded for the supply of their immediate necessities. Domestic manufactures were encouraged, that the wants of the inhabitants from the nonimportation agreement might be diminished; and the greatest zeal was discovered by a large majority of the people, to comply with the determinations of these new-made representative bodies. In this manner, while the forms of the old government subsisted, a new and independent authority was virtually establshed. It was so universally the sense of the people that the public good required a compliance with the recommendations of Congress, that any man who discovered any anxiety about the continuance of trade and business was considered as a selfish individual, preferring private interest to the good of his country. Under the influence of these principles, the intemperate zeal of the populace transported them frequently so far beyond the limits of moderation as to apply singular punishments to particular persons who contravened the general sense of the community.

On the termination of the session of Congress, Washington returned to Mount Vernon to resume again his agricultural pursuits, and to confer with George Mason and his other patriotic neighbors on the portentous aspect of public affairs. He was still, as was his wont, much occupied with various private trusts and duties which his disinterested kindness of heart had imposed on him. In writing to a neighbor, who had wished to appoint him in his will to the guardianship of his son, he says: "I can solemnly declare to you, that for a year or two past there has been scarce a moment that I could properly call my own. What with my own business, my present ward's,

my mother's, which is wholly in my hands, Colonel Colvill's, Mrs. Savage's, Colonel Fairfax's, Colonel Mercer's, and the little assistance I have undertaken to give in the management of my brother Augustine's concerns (for I have absolutely refused to qualify as an executor), together with the share I take in public affairs, I have been kept constantly engaged in writing letters, settling accounts, and negotiating one piece of business or another; by which means I have really been deprived of every kind of enjoyment, and had almost fully resolved to engage in no fresh matter till I had entirely wound up the old."

In addition to the amount of business demanding his attention at this time, there was a demand for his aid in the military affairs of Virginia, to which we shall presently call the reader's attention.

CHAPTER XI.

WASHINGTON A MEMBER OF CONVENTION.

1775.

DURING the session of the Continental Congress the march of events in Massachusetts had frequently commanded the attention of the members. General Gage, with his positive orders from the ministry to overawe and subdue the people, and the Massachusetts men, with a dogged determination neither to be overawed nor subdued, were engaged in a struggle which was destined speedily to bring the controversy to the arbitrament of the sword. The leaders, such as Samuel Adams, John Hancock, and Joseph Warren, were by no means intimidated by the menacing attitude of Gage; but persevered steadily in the execution of their purpose.

Observing the firm attitude of the people, and their evident determination no longer to submit to the commercial regulations of Great Britain, the officers of the revenue, who had been acting at Salem since the shutting up of the port of Boston, quitted their posts and repaired to the latter place for safety; so that the whole apparatus of a custom house was transferred to a port, which an act of Parliament had pronounced it unlawful for any vessel to enter.

Gage had issued writs for assembling the General Court at Salem, on the 5th of October (1774); but seemingly apprehensive of a turbulent session, he had countermanded the elections and suspended the meetings of the members

already returned. The people pronounced the second proclamation illegal, and utterly disregarding it, chose their representatives in obedience to the first.

The Assembly, to the number of ninety, met at the time and place appointed. They waited a day for the Governor to open the session; but finding that he did not appear, they, on the third day, resolved themselves into a Provincial Congress, and adjourned to Concord, a town about twenty miles distant from Boston. They chose John Hancock president, and appointed a committee to wait on the Governor with a remonstrance, in which they accounted for their meeting by representing the distressed state of the Colony; mentioned the grievous apprehensions of the people; asserted that the rigor of the Boston Port Bill was increased by the manner of its execution; complained of the late laws, and of the hostile preparations on Boston Neck; and adjured him to desist immediately from the construction of a fortress there.

Gage was at a loss how to act. He could not recognize the meeting at Concord as a legal assembly, and was sensible of the imprudence of increasing the public irritation by declining to take notice of their remonstrance. He was constrained by the pressure of circumstances to return an answer; and in that answer, he expressed his indignation at the suspicion that the lives, liberty, or property of any but avowed enemies were in danger from English troops; and observed that notwithstanding the hostile dispositions manifested toward them, by withholding almost every necessary accommodation, they had not discovered that resentment which such unfriendly treatment was calculated to provoke. He told them that, while they complained of alterations in their charter by act of Parliament, they were themselves, by their present assembling, subverting that charter, and acting in direct viola-

tion of their own Constitution; he therefore warned them of their danger, and called on them to desist from such unconstitutional proceedings.

But the warnings of the Governor made no impression on the Provincial Congress. On the 17th of October, 1774, that Assembly adjourned to Cambridge, about four miles from Boston. They resolved to purchase military stores, and to enlist a number of *minute-men*, so named from their engaging to take the field in arms on a minute's warning.

They also appointed a *committee of safety*, with authority to call out the militia when thought necessary for the defense of the inhabitants of the province; and a *committee of supplies*, to purchase ammunition, ordnance, and other military stores. They elected Jedidiah Pribble, Artemas Ward, and Colonel Pomeroy, who had seen some service in the late war, general officers, and appointed them to the chief command of the minute-men and militia, if they be called into actual service. On the 27th of October, the Congress adjourned to the 23d of November.

On the approach of winter, the Governor ordered temporary barracks for the troops to be erected; but he found much difficulty in the execution of his purpose, as, through the influence of the selectmen and committees, the mechanics were unwilling or afraid to engage in the work, and the merchants declined to execute his orders.

The mutual suspicions of the Governor and people of Massachusetts were now so strong that every petty incident increased the irritation. Each party made loud professions of the best intentions, and each watched the other with a jealous eye. In a proclamation the Governor forbade the people to pay any regard to the requisitions, directions, or resolutions of the Provincial Congress, and denounced that body as an illegal assembly; but the proc-

lamation was disregarded and the recommendations of Congress were revered and promptly obeyed.

Instead of being intimidated by the Governor's proclamation, the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, on reassembling after their adjournment, proceeded with greater boldness than ever and gave decisive evidence of their determination to carry matters to extremities rather than submit to the late acts of Parliament. They resolved to have 12,000 men in readiness to act on any emergency, and ordered a fourth of the militia to be enlisted as minute-men, and empowered them to choose their own officers. They dispatched agents to New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Connecticut to concert measures with the leading men in those provinces and to engage them to provide their contingents for an army of 20,000 men. They resolved to bring their force into action and to oppose General Gage whenever he should march his troops out of Boston, with their baggage, ammunition, and artillery; and they applied to the ministers of religion throughout the province, desiring their countenance and co-operation. They also added Colonels Thomas and Heath to the number of generals whom they had formerly nominated. Toward the end of November the Congress dissolved itself, having appointed another to be held in the month of February.

Alarmed by the proceedings in the several provinces, the ministry had issued a proclamation prohibiting the exportation of military stores from Britain. On hearing of this proclamation, the inhabitants of Rhode Island removed above forty pieces of cannon from the batteries about the harbor, for the avowed purpose of preventing them from falling into the hands of the King's troops, and of employing them against such persons as might attempt to infringe their liberties. About the same time the Assembly of the province passed resolutions for purchasing arms

and military stores at the public expense, and for carefully training the militia in military exercises.

The people of New Hampshire, who had hitherto been moderate, were excited to insurrection by the proclamation and by the example of their neighbors in Rhode Island. They surprised a small fort at Portsmouth and carried off the military stores which it contained.

The beginning of the year 1775 presented a gloomy prospect to America; all the Provincial Assemblies, except that of New York, approved of the resolutions of the General Congress, and even the Assembly of New York joined in the complaints of the other provinces, although it was less resolute in its opposition to the obnoxious laws. The passions of the people were everywhere roused and great agitation prevailed. The inhabitants were all in motion, forming county meetings, entering into associations, recommending measures for carrying into execution the resolutions of the General Congress, and choosing committees of inspection and observation to take care that the public resolutions should be universally attended to, and to guard against the practices of those selfish individuals, who, for interested purposes, might wish to elude them. In the midst of all this bustle the militia were everywhere carefully trained.

Meanwhile the privations and sufferings of the inhabitants of Boston were grievous, and their passions were highly excited; but their turbulent spirit was kept in check by the presence of the troops. Supplies and provisions were sent them from the other Colonies; these however formed but a partial and precarious resource; but the people were encouraged by the sympathy of their brethren, and by the thought that they were considered martyrs in the common cause.

Notwithstanding the portentous aspect of affairs, many

of the colonists still believed that there would be no appeal to arms. Formerly their nonimportation associations had produced the desired effect, and they flattered themselves that similar measures would again be followed by similar results; that the British ministry would never come to an open rupture with the best customers of their merchants and manufacturers, but would recede from their pretensions when convinced of the determined opposition of the Americans. On the other hand, the British ministry expected the colonists would yield; and thus both parties persisted in their claims till neither could easily give way.

In the provinces, although there was much apparent unanimity in opposing the late acts of Parliament, yet not a few secretly wished to submit peaceably to British authority; some from a conviction that it was right to do so; more from timidity and selfishness; but both of these classes were overawed by the more active and audacious partisans of American freedom.

While matters were in this critical state in America, many of the people of Britain took little interest in the affairs of the Colonies. They did not feel their own interests immediately affected, and consequently their sensibility was not awakened. They had long been accustomed to hear of American quarrels, and satisfied themselves with thinking that the present one would pass away as those before it had done. While the nation was indifferent, the ministry were irritated but irresolute. In his speech at the opening of Parliament, the King informed the two Houses "that a most daring spirit of resistance and disobedience still prevailed in Massachusetts, and had broken out in fresh violences of a very criminal nature; but that the most proper and effectual measures had been taken to prevent those mischiefs; and that they might depend on a firm resolution to withstand every attempt to

weaken or impair the supreme authority of the Legislature over all the dominions of the Crown."

In the debates on American affairs the partisans of the ministry spoke of the colonists in the most contemptuous manner; affirmed that they were undisciplined and incapable of discipline, and that their numbers would only increase their confusion and facilitate their defeat.

Meanwhile the colonists were not idle. On the 1st of February, 1775, the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts met at Cambridge, and, apprehensive of being too much within the reach of General Gage, toward the middle of the month they again adjourned to Concord. They there took decisive measures for resisting the obnoxious acts of Parliament. They earnestly exhorted the militia in general, and the minute-men in particular, to be indefatigable in improving themselves in military discipline; they recommended the making of firearms and bayonets; and they dissuaded the people from supplying the troops in Boston with anything necessary for military service. The committee of safety resolved to purchase powder, artillery, provisions, and other military stores, and to deposit them partly at Worcester and partly at Concord.

In this alarming posture of public affairs, General Gage conceived it to be his duty to seize the warlike stores of the colonists wherever he could find them. With this view he ordered a small detachment, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Leslie, on Sunday, the 26th of February, to bring off some field pieces which he understood the Provincial Congress had at Salem. The party landed at Marblehead and marched to Salem, but found no cannon there. Believing they had been removed only a short time before, the commanding officer determined on pursuit. He reached a small river, on the way to Danvers, over which was a drawbridge; but on his approach some people on

the other side drew it up, and alleged that, as both the bridge and road were private property, the soldiers had no right to pass that way. The party were about to use some boats, but the owners instantly scuttled them. The bridge was at length let down; but the day was so far spent that Colonel Leslie, deeming it inexpedient to proceed much farther, returned to Boston. This ineffectual attempt showed the designs of the Governor, and gave fresh activity to the vigilance of the people.

The Colonies were now all in commotion, and preparations were everywhere making for the General Congress, which was to assemble in the month of May. New York was the only place which discovered much backwardness in the matter; and perhaps the timid and selfish policy of that province contributed no less to the war than the boldness of the people of Massachusetts; for the British ministry were encouraged by the irresolution of the people of New York to persist in their plan of coercion, from which they had been almost deterred by the firm attitude and united counsels of the other Colonies. But hoping, by the compliance of New York with their designs, to separate the middle and southern from the northern provinces, and so easily subjugate them all, they determined to persevere in strong measures. The active exertions however of the adherents of the British ministry were defeated, even in New York, by the resolute conduct of their opponents, and that province sent deputies to the General Congress.

It was in the interval between the First and Second Continental Congresses that Alexander Hamilton, a youth of uncommonly developed intellectual power, put in his first appearance in the political history of New York. About two months after the adjournment (October 26, 1774) of the First Continental Congress, a clergyman of Royalist

proclivities by the name of Seabury, who was ten years later made a bishop in Scotland and became from 1784 the first Episcopal bishop of Connecticut, published a couple of pamphlets, entitled "Free Thoughts on the Proceedings of the Continental Congress,"* and "Congress Canvassed by a Westchester Farmer."† Within a fortnight after the appearance of the second tract appeared "A Full Vindication." A reply to this was published, and then a month later came a still more elaborate pamphlet, entitled "The Farmer Refuted." These two productions in the patriot interest excited much attention, were widely read, and were attributed to Jay. They are not now much more entertaining than other like essays of their period and class, but they take high rank among the writings of a period remarkable for the ability of its political discussions. They have certain marks of youth about them, but are singularly free from such defects; are little short of wonderful when we remember that they are the work of a boy not 18 years old.

The first of Hamilton's pieces rests upon this ground: "I verily believe a nonimportation and a nonexportation will effect all the purposes they are intended for" (p. 20). "Thus have I clearly proved that the plan of opposition concerted by Congress is perfectly consonant with justice and sound policy, and will, in all human probability, secure our freedom against the assaults of our enemies" (p. 30). "All that we aim at is to convince the ministry that we are not such asses as to let them ride us as they please" (p. 31). "We cannot submit to the principle, *a right to tax us in all cases whatsoever*" (p. 35). "Your lives, your property, your religion are all at stake" (p. 38). "Give me the steady, uniform, unshaken security of con-

* December 15, 1774.

† February, 1775. The first was of forty-eight pages and the second of 117 pages.

stitutional freedom. Give me the right to be tried by a jury of my own neighbors, and to be taxed by my own representatives only" (p. 47).

In his second performance the point is argued that "the representatives of Great Britain *have no right to govern us*" (p. 71). "If the authority of the House of Commons over America be proved not to exist, the dispute is at an end" (p. 74). "The King is the only sovereign of the empire. * * * Imagine the Legislature of New York independent on that of Great Britain. * * * The King will be the great connecting principle. The several parts of the empire, though otherwise independent on each other, will all be dependent on him" (p. 77). "The authority of the British Parliament over America would, in all probability, be a more intolerable and excessive species of despotism than an absolute monarchy" (p. 78). "The several parts of the empire may each enjoy a separate, independent Legislature with regard to each other, under one common head, the King" (p. 81). "The right of colonists to exercise a legislative power is an inherent right, founded upon the rights of all men to freedom and happiness, [to] civil liberty [which] cannot possibly have any existence where the society for whom laws are made have no share in making them, and where the interest of their legislators is not inseparably interwoven with theirs" (p. 84). "The foundation of the English Constitution rests upon this principle, that no laws have any validity or binding force without the consent and approbation of the *people*, given in the persons of *their* representatives, periodically elected by *themselves* [exception only being made, in the words of Blackstone, of 'such persons as are *in so mean a situation* that they are esteemed to have *no will* of their own,' but, 'if they had votes, would be tempted to dispose of them under some undue influence or other'] " (p. 85). "To

take such a survey of the political history of the Colonies as may be necessary to cast a full light upon their present contest" would show that "the sole right of the territories in America was vested in the Crown" (pp. 88, 89). "In April, 1621, the House of Commons was informed by order of King James, that '*America was not annexed to the realm, and that it was not fitting that Parliament should make laws for those countries*'" (p. 96). "Charles I, who granted the Massachusetts and Maryland charters, in like manner refused the royal assent [to a fishing bill], with the declaration that 'the Colonies *were without the realm and jurisdiction of Parliament*'" (p. 96). "The American charters are entirely discordant with the sovereignty of Parliament; * * * the Parliament of Great Britain has no sovereign authority over America; * * * the voice of nature, the *spirit* of the British Constitution, and the charters of the Colonies in general demonstrate the absolute nonexistence of parliamentary supremacy" (pp. 108, 109). "There is no need however of this plea. THE sacred rights of mankind are not to be rummaged for among old parchments or musty records. They are written, as with a sunbeam, in the whole volume of human nature, by the hand of the Divinity itself, and can never be erased or obscured by mortal POWER" (p. 108).

"If Great Britain is determined to enslave us, it must be by force of arms; and to attempt this would be nothing less than *the grossest infatuation, madness itself*. Whatever may be said of the disciplined troops of Great Britain, the event of the contest must be extremely doubtful. There is a certain enthusiasm in liberty that makes human nature rise above itself in acts of bravery and heroism. It cannot be expected that America would yield without a magnanimous, persevering, and bloody struggle. * * * Great Britain could not spare an army of above 15,000

WASHINGTON AT THE BATTLE OF PRINCETON.

men, * * * to subdue near 600,000. * * * Forty thousand will be a sufficient number to make head at a time. * * * The circumstances of our country put it in our power to evade a pitched battle. It will be better policy to harass and exhaust the soldiery by frequent skirmishes and incursions than to take the open field with them" (pp. 155, 156, 158, 159). "There are many officers who have served in the last war with reputation dispersed through the Colonies. These might have the superior direction of matters; and there are men enough of known sense and courage who would soon make excellent officers" (p. 160). "You ask me, What resources have the Colonies to pay, clothe, arm, and feed their troops? * * * France, Spain, and Holland would find means to supply us with whatever we wanted. Let it not be said that this last is a bare *possibility*. There is the highest degree of probability in the case. A more desirable object to France and Spain than the disunion of these Colonies from Great Britain cannot be imagined. Every dictate of policy and interest would prompt them to forward it by every possible means. * * * They would not neglect anything in their power to make the opposition on our part as vigorous and obstinate as our affairs would admit of" (pp. 161, 162). "I affirm that nothing but the most *frantic extravagance* can influence the administration to attempt the reduction of America by force of arms" (p. 164). "I am a warm advocate for limited monarchy, and an unfeigned well-wisher to the present royal family. * * * I verily believe that the best way to secure a permanent and happy union between Great Britain and the Colonies is to permit the latter to be as free as they desire" (pp. 168, 169).

[February 2, 1775, the citizens of Fairfax county assembled with Washington as president, and voted to enroll the county militia, and to pay a tax of three shillings

per poll to meet the cost of equipping them for service. Washington wrote February 25, 1775, to John Connolly:

"I confess the state of affairs is sufficiently alarming; which our critical situation with regard to the Indians does not diminish. I have only to express my most ardent wishes that every measure, consistent with reason and sound policy, may be adopted to keep those people at this time in good humor; for another rupture would not only ruin the external but the internal parts of this government. If the journal of your proceedings in the Indian war is to be published, I shall have an opportunity of seeing what I have long coveted.

"With us here things wear a disagreeable aspect; and the minds of men are exceedingly disturbed at the measures of the British government. The King's speech and address of both Houses, prognosticate nothing favorable to us; but by some subsequent proceeding thereto, as well as by private letters from London, there is reason to believe the ministry would willingly change their ground, from a conviction the forcible measures will be inadequate to the end designed."]

Although some of the persons most obnoxious to the British Government had withdrawn from Boston, yet many zealous Americans still remained in the town, observed every motion of General Gage with a vigilant eye, and transmitted to their friends in the country notices of his proceedings and probable intentions. The American stores at Concord had attracted the General's attention, and he determined to seize them. But, although he had been careful to conceal his intention, yet some intimations of it reached the ears of the colonists, who took their measures accordingly.

At 11 o'clock at night, on the 18th of April, 1775, General Gage embarked 800 grenadiers and light infantry,

the flower of his army, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Smith and Major Pitcairn, on Charles river at Boston Neck.

They sailed up the river, landed at Phipps's farm, and advanced toward Concord. Of this movement some of the friends of the American cause got notice just before the embarkation of the troops, and they instantly dispatched messengers by different routes with the information. The troops soon perceived, by the ringing of bells and firing of musketry, that, notwithstanding the secrecy with which they had quitted Boston, they had been discovered, and that the alarm was fast spreading throughout the country. Between 4 and 5 o'clock, on the morning of the 19th of April, the detachment reached Lexington, thirteen miles from Boston. Here about seventy of the militia were assembled, and were standing near the road; but their number being so small, they had no intention of making any resistance to the military. Major Pitcairn, who had been sent forward with the light infantry, rode toward them, calling out, "Disperse, you rebels! throw down your arms and disperse!" The order was not instantly obeyed. Major Pitcairn advanced a little farther, fired his pistol, and flourished his sword, while his men began to fire, with a shout. Several Americans fell; the rest dispersed, but the firing on them was continued; and, on observing this, some of the retreating colonists returned the fire. Eight Americans remained dead on the field.

At the close of this rencounter the rest of the British detachment, under Lieutenant-Colonel Smith, came up; and the party, without further violence, proceeded to Concord. On arriving at that place they found a body of militia drawn up, who retreated across the bridge before the British light infantry. The main body of the royal troops entered the town, destroyed two pieces of cannon,

with their carriages, and a number of carriage wheels; threw 500 pounds of balls into the river and wells, and destroyed about sixty barrels of flour. These were all the stores they found.

While the main body of the troops was engaged in these operations, the light infantry kept possession of the bridge, the Americans having retired to wait for reinforcements. Reinforcements arrived, and John Butterworth, of Concord, who commanded the Americans, ordered his men to advance; but, ignorant of what had happened at Lexington, enjoined them not to fire unless the troops fired first. The matter did not long remain in suspense. The Americans advanced; the troops fired on them; the Americans returned the fire; a smart skirmish ensued and a number of men fell on each side.

The troops, having accomplished the object of their expedition, began to retire. But blood had been shed, and the aggressors were not to be allowed to escape with impunity. The country was alarmed; armed men crowded in from every quarter, and the retreating troops were assailed with an unceasing but irregular discharge of musketry.

General Gage had early information that the country was rising in arms, and, about 8 in the morning, he dispatched 900 men, under the command of Earl Percy, to support his first party. According to Gordon, this detachment left Boston with their music playing "Yankee Doodle," a tune composed in derision of the inhabitants of the northern provinces; an act which had no tendency to subdue, but which was well calculated to irritate, the colonists.

Earl Percy met Colonel Smith's retreating party at Lexington much exhausted; and, being provided with two pieces of artillery, he was able to keep the Americans in

check. The whole party rested on their arms till they took some refreshment, of which they stood much in need. But there was no time for delay, as the militia and minute-men were hastening in from all quarters to the scene of action. When the troops resumed their march the attack was renewed, and Earl Percy continued the retreat under an incessant and galling fire of smallarms. By means of his field pieces and musketry however he was able to keep the assailants at a respectful distance. The colonists were under no authority, but ran across the fields from one place to another, taking their station at the points from which they could fire on the troops with most safety and effect. Numbers of them, becoming weary of the pursuit, retired from the contest; but their place was supplied by newcomers; so that, although not more than 400 or 500 of the provincials were actually engaged at any one time, yet the conflict was continued without intermission till the troops, in a state of great exhaustion, reached Charlestown Neck, with only two or three rounds of cartridges each, although they had thirty-six in the morning.

On this momentous day the British had 65 men killed, 180 wounded, and 28 taken prisoners. The provincials had 50 men killed, 34 wounded, and 4 missing.

Washington's opinion of the battle of Lexington is thus expressed in a letter of May 31, 1775, to George William Fairfax, then residing in England:

"Before this letter will come to hand, you must undoubtedly have received an account of the engagement in the Massachusetts Bay, between *the ministerial troops* (for we do not, nor can we yet prevail upon ourselves to call them the King's troops) and the provincials of that government. But as you may not have heard how that

affair began, I inclose the several affidavits, which were taken after the action.

"General Gage acknowledges that the detachment under Lieutenant-Colonel Smith was sent out to destroy private property; or, in other words, to destroy a magazine which self-preservation obliged the inhabitants to establish. And he also confesses, in effect at least, that his men made a very precipitate retreat from Concord, notwithstanding the reinforcement under Lord Percy; the last of which may serve to convince Lord Sandwich, and others of the same sentiment, that *the Americans will fight for their liberties and property*, however pusillanimous in his lordship's eye they may appear in other respects.

"From the best accounts I have been able to collect of that affair, indeed from every one, I believe the fact, stripped of all coloring, to be plainly this, that if the retreat had not been as precipitate as it was — God knows it could not well have been more so — the ministerial troops must have surrendered, or been totally cut off; for they had not arrived at Charlestown (under cover of their ships) half an hour before a powerful body of men from Marblehead and Salem was at their heels, and must, if they had happened to be up one hour sooner, inevitably have intercepted their retreat to Charlestown. Unhappy it is, though, to reflect that a brother's sword has been sheathed in a brother's breast, and that the once happy and peaceful plains of America are either to be drenched with blood or inhabited by slaves. Sad alternative! But *can a virtuous man hesitate in his choice?*"

On Monday, the 20th of March, 1775, the convention of delegates from the several counties and corporations of Virginia met for the second time. This assembly was held in the old church in the town of Richmond. Washington and Patrick Henry were members of that body.

The reader will bear in mind the tone of the instructions given by the convention of the preceding year to their deputies in Congress. He will remember that, while they recite with great feeling the series of grievances under which the Colonies had labored, and insist with firmness on their constitutional rights, they give nevertheless the most explicit and solemn pledge of their faith and true allegiance to His Majesty, King George III, and avow their determination to support him with their lives and fortunes, in the legal exercise of all his just rights and prerogatives. He will remember that these instructions contain also an expression of their sincere approbation of a connection with Great Britain, and their ardent wishes for a return of that friendly intercourse from which this country had derived so much prosperity and happiness.

These sentiments still influenced many of the leading members of the convention of 1775. They could not part with the fond hope that those peaceful days would again return, which had shed so much light and warmth over the land; and the report of the King's gracious reception of the petition from Congress tended to cherish and foster that hope, and to render them averse to any means of violence. But Patrick Henry saw things with a steadier eye and a deeper insight. His judgment was too solid to be duped by appearances, and his heart too firm and manly to be amused by false and flattering hopes. He had long since read the true character of the British court, and saw that no alternative remained for his country but abject submission or heroic resistance. It was not for a soul like Henry's to hesitate between these courses. He had offered upon the altar of liberty no divided heart. The gulf of war which yawned before him was indeed fiery and fearful, but he saw that the awful plunge was inevi-

table. The body of the convention however hesitated. They cast around "a longing, lingering look" on those flowery fields on which peace, and ease, and joy were still sporting, and it required all the energies of a mentor like Henry to prepare their minds for the dread alternative of open hostilities.

The convention being formed and organized for business proceeded, in the first place, to express their unqualified approbation of the measures of Congress, and to declare that they considered "this whole continent as under the highest obligations to that respectable body, for the wisdom of their counsels, and their unremitted endeavors to maintain and preserve inviolate the just rights and liberties of His Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects in America."

They next resolved, that "the warmest thanks of the convention, and of all the inhabitants of this Colony, were due, and that this just tribute of applause be presented to the worthy delegates, deputed by a former convention to represent this Colony in General Congress, for their cheerful undertaking and faithful discharge of the very important trust reposed in them."

The morning of the 23d of March, 1775, was opened by reading a petition and memorial from the Assembly of Jamaica to the King's most excellent majesty, whereupon it was

"*Resolved*, That the unfeigned thanks and most grateful acknowledgments of the convention be presented to that very respectable Assembly, for the exceeding generous and affectionate part they have so nobly taken in the unhappy contest between Great Britain and her Colonies, and for their truly patriotic endeavors to fix the just claim of the colonists upon the most permanent constitutional principles; that the Assembly be assured that it is the most

ardent wish of this Colony (and they were persuaded of the whole continent of North America) to see a speedy return of those halcyon days, when we lived a free and happy people."

These proceedings were not adapted to the taste of Patrick Henry; on the contrary, they were "gall and wormwood" to him. The House required to be wrought up to a bolder tone. He rose therefore and moved the following manly resolutions:

"*Resolved*, That a well-regulated militia, composed of gentlemen and yeomen, is the natural strength and only security of a free government; that such a militia in this Colony would forever render it unnecessary for the mother country to keep among us, for the purpose of our defense, any standing army of mercenary soldiers, always subversive of the quiet, and dangerous to the liberties of the people, and would obviate the pretext of taxing us for their support.

"That the establishment of such militia is, at this time, peculiarly necessary, by the state of our laws, for the protection and defense of the country, some of which are already expired and others will shortly be so; and that the known remissness of government in calling us together in legislative capacity renders it too insecure, in this time of danger and distress, to rely that opportunity will be given of renewing them in General Assembly, or making any provision to secure our inestimable rights and liberties from those further violations with which they are threatened.

"*Resolved*, therefore, That this Colony be immediately put into a state of defense, and that ——— be a committee to prepare a plan for embodying, arming, and disciplining such a number of men as may be sufficient for that purpose."

The alarm which such a proposition must have given to those who had contemplated no resistance of a character more serious than petition, nonimportation, and passive fortitude, and who still hung with suppliant tenderness on the skirts of Britain, will be readily conceived by the reflecting reader. The shock was painful. It was almost general. The resolutions were opposed as not only rash in policy, but as harsh and wellnigh impious in point of feeling. Some of the warmest patriots of the convention opposed them. Richard Bland, Benjamin Harrison, and Edmund Pendleton, who had so lately drank of the fountain of patriotism in the Continental Congress, and Robert C. Nicholas, one of the best as well as ablest men and patriots in the State, resisted them with all their influence and abilities.

They urged the late gracious reception of the congressional petition by the throne; they insisted that national comity, and much more, filial respect, demanded the exercise of a more dignified patience. That the sympathies of the parent country were now on our side. That the friends of American liberty in Parliament were still with us, and had, as yet, had no cause to blush for our indiscretion. That the manufacturing interests of Great Britain, already smarting under the effects of our nonimportation, cooperated powerfully toward our relief. That the sovereign himself had relented, and showed that he looked upon our sufferings with an eye of pity. "Was this a moment," they asked, "to disgust our friends, to extinguish all the conspiring sympathies which were working in our favor, to turn their friendship into hatred, their pity into revenge? And what was there," they asked, "in the situation of the Colony, to tempt us to this? Were we a great military people? Were we ready for war? Where were our stores, where were our arms, where our soldiers, where our gen-

erals, where our money, the sinews of war? They were nowhere to be found. In truth, we were poor, we were naked, we were defenseless. And yet we talk of assuming the front of war! of assuming it too against a nation, one of the most formidable in the world! A nation ready and armed at all points! Her navies riding triumphant in every sea; her armies never marching but to certain victory! What was to be the issue of the struggle we were called upon to court? What could be the issue in the comparative circumstances of the two countries, but to yield up this country an easy prey to Great Britain, and to convert the illegitimate right which the British Parliament now claimed into a firm and indubitable right by conquest? The measure might be brave, but it was the bravery of madmen. It had no pretension to the character of prudence, and as little to the grace of genuine courage. It would be time enough to resort to measures of despair when every well-founded hope had entirely vanished."

To this strong view of the subject, supported as it was by the stubborn fact of the well-known helpless condition of the Colony, the opponents of these resolutions superadded every topic of persuasion which belonged to the cause:

"The strength and luster which we have derived from our connection with Great Britain, the domestic comforts which we had drawn from the same source, and whose value we were now able to estimate by their loss; that ray of reconciliation which was dawning upon us from the east, and which promised so fair and happy a day; with this they contrasted the clouds and storms which the measure now proposed was so well calculated to raise, and in which we should not have even the poor consolation of being pitied by the world, since we should have so needlessly and rashly drawn them upon ourselves."

These arguments and topics of persuasion were so well justified by the appearance of things, and were moreover so entirely in unison with that love of ease and quiet which is natural to man, and that disposition to hope for happier times, even under the most forbidding circumstances, that an ordinary man, in Mr. Henry's situation, would have been glad to compound with the displeasure of the House by being permitted to withdraw his resolutions in silence.

Not so Mr. Henry. His was a spirit fitted to raise the whirlwind, as well as to ride in and direct it. His was that comprehensive view, that unerring prescience, that perfect command over the actions of men, which qualified him not merely to guide, but almost to create the destinies of nations.

He rose at this time with a majesty unusual to him in an exordium, and with all that self-possession by which he was so invariably distinguished: "No man," he said, "thought more highly than he did of the patriotism, as well as abilities, of the very worthy gentlemen who had just addressed the House. But different men often saw the same subject in different lights; and therefore he hoped it would not be thought disrespectful to those gentlemen, if, entertaining as he did, opinions of a character very opposite to theirs, he should speak forth his sentiments freely and without reserve. This," he said, "was no time for ceremony. The question before this House was one of awful moment to the country. For his own part, he considered it as nothing less than a question of freedom or slavery. And in proportion to the magnitude of the subject ought to be the freedom of the debate. It was only in this way that they could hope to arrive at truth and fulfil the great responsibility which they held to God and their country. Should he keep back his opinions at such a time, through fear of giving offense, he should con-

sider himself as guilty of treason toward his country, and of an act of disloyalty toward the majesty of Heaven, which he revered above all earthly kings.

"Mr. President," said he, "it is natural to man to indulge in the illusions of hope. We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth, and listen to the song of that siren, till she transforms us into beasts. Is this," he asked, "the part of wise men engaged in a great and arduous struggle for liberty? Were we disposed to be of the number of those, who, having eyes, see not, and having ears, hear not, the things which so nearly concern their temporal salvation?" For his part, whatever anguish of spirit it might cost, he was willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst and to provide for it.

"He had," he said, "but one lamp by which his feet were guided, and that was the lamp of experience. He knew no way of judging of the future but by the past. And, judging by the past, he wished to know what there had been in the conduct of the British ministry for the last ten years to justify those hopes with which these gentlemen had been pleased to solace themselves and the House? Is it that insidious smile with which our petition has been lately received? Trust it not, sir; it will prove a snare to your feet. Suffer not yourselves to be betrayed with a kiss. Ask yourselves how this gracious reception of our petition comports with those warlike preparations which cover our waters and darken our land. Are fleets and armies necessary to a work of love and reconciliation? Have we shown ourselves so unwilling to be reconciled that force must be called in to win back our love? Let us not deceive ourselves, sir. What means this martial array if its purpose be not to force us to submission? Can the gentlemen assign any other possible motive for it? Has Great Britain any enemy in this quarter of the world to

call for this accumulation of navies and armies? No, sir, she has none. They are meant for us; they can be meant for no other. They are sent over to bind and rivet upon us those chains which the British ministry have been so long forging. And what have we to oppose them? Shall we try argument? Sir, we have been trying that for the last ten years. Have we anything new to offer on the subject? Nothing. We have held the subject up in every light of which it is capable; but it has been all in vain. Shall we resort to entreaty and humble supplication? What terms shall we find which have not been already exhausted? Let us not, I beseech you, sir, deceive ourselves longer. Sir, we have done everything that could be done to avert the storm which is now coming on. We have petitioned, we have remonstrated, we have supplicated, we have prostrated ourselves before the throne, and have implored its interposition to arrest the tyrannical hands of the ministry and Parliament. Our petitions have been slighted; our remonstrances have produced additional violence and insult; our supplications have been disregarded; and we have been spurned, with contempt, from the foot of the throne. In vain, after these things, may we indulge the fond hope of peace and reconciliation. There is no longer any room for hope. If we wish to be free; if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending; if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon, until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained, we must fight! I repeat it, sir, we must fight! An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts is all that is left us!

"They tell us, sir," continued Mr. Henry, "that we are weak — unable to cope with so formidable an adversary.

But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British guard shall be stationed in every house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance by lying supinely on our backs and hugging the delusive phantom of hope, until our enemies shall have bound us hand and foot? Sir, we are not weak, if we make a proper use of those means which the God of nature hath placed in our power. Three millions of people armed in the holy cause of liberty, and in a country such as we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us. Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations, and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Besides, sir, we have no election. If we were base enough to desire it, it is now too late to retire from the contest. There is no retreat but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged. Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war is inevitable, and let it come! I repeat it, sir, let it come!

"It is in vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry peace, peace; but there is no peace. The war is actually begun. The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms!* Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take, but as for me," cried he, with both his arms extended aloft, his brows knit,

* This speech was delivered a few days before the battle of Lexington.

every feature marked with the resolute purpose of his soul, and his voice swelled to its boldest note of exclamation, "give me liberty or give me death!"

He took his seat. No murmur of applause was heard. The effect was too deep. After the trance of a moment, several members started from their seats. The cry "to arms!" seemed to quiver on every lip and gleam from every eye! Richard H. Lee arose and supported Mr. Henry with his usual spirit and elegance. But his melody was lost amid the agitations of that ocean which the master spirit of the storm had raised up on high. That supernatural voice still sounded in their ears and shivered along their arteries. They heard, in every pause, the cry of liberty or death. They became impatient of speech; their souls were on fire for action.

The resolutions were adopted, and Patrick Henry, Richard H. Lee, Robert C. Nicholas, Benjamin Harrison, Lemuel Riddick, George Washington, Adam Stevens, Andrew Lewis, William Christian, Edmund Pendleton, Thomas Jefferson, and Isaac Lane, esquires, were appointed a committee to prepare the plan called for by the last resolution.

The plan for embodying, arming, and disciplining the militia proposed by the committee which has just been mentioned was received and adopted.

The convention having adopted a plan for the encouragement of arts and manufactures in the Colony of Virginia and reappointed their former deputies to the Continental Congress, with the substitution of Mr. Jefferson for Mr. Peyton Randolph, in case of the nonattendance of the latter, and having also provided for a re-election of delegates to the next convention, came to an adjournment.

How entirely Washington concurred in the views of Patrick Henry on this momentous occasion is clearly ap-

parent by the activity with which he at once entered into the spirit of the resolutions for placing the militia on a respectable footing with regard to discipline and efficiency. He was one of the committee for drafting and reporting the plan for putting the resolutions in execution. Before the convention rose he wrote as follows to his brother, John Augustine Washington:

"I had like to have forgotten to express my entire approbation of the laudable pursuit you are engaged in, of training an independent company. I have promised to review the independent company of Richmond some time this summer, they having made me a tender of the command of it. At the same time I could review yours, and shall very cheerfully accept the honor of commanding it, if occasion require it to be drawn out, as *it is my full intention to devote my life and fortune in the cause we are engaged in*, if needful."

This last expression of Washington shows that, after considering the whole subject with his usual calm deliberation, he had come to the same conclusion with Henry, that the war was inevitable, and that he had adopted the firm determination to devote himself with all his energies to its prosecution whenever the time for action should arrive.

On his return to Mount Vernon, after the adjournment of the convention, he took an active part in the military preparations which had been enjoined on the people by that body. The system of independent militia companies was no novelty in Virginia. The people of that Colony had long been accustomed to associate in such companies for the purpose of military discipline. They chose their own officers, provided themselves with uniforms, arms, and colors, and were governed by the militia laws. Dunmore, at that time Governor of Virginia, had encouraged this system, having occasion for the service of the inde-

pendent companies in an Indian war which had broken out on the western border.

Washington, confessedly the most distinguished military officer in the Colony, forthwith interested himself in the work of disciplining the militia, attending reviews, giving advice and direction, and infusing his own spirit of activity and order into their proceedings. Indeed, he was generally regarded as the person destined to lead the forces of that Colony, in case of hostilities, as he had done in the last war. But he was reserved for a higher destiny.

CHAPTER XII.

PARTISAN WARFARE.

1775.

IT must be confessed that at the period at which we have now arrived, the state of affairs in the Colonies was anything but cheering. A few Colonies, scattered along the whole Atlantic coast, had provoked the resentment of one of the most powerful nations in the world; and they were now about to experience the full effects of that resentment.

But, unpromising as their prospects were, the people determined not to be wanting to themselves, and took their measures with promptitude and vigor. Intelligence of the events of the 19th of April spread rapidly over the country; and the militia, from every quarter, hastened toward Boston. On the 20th, the Provincial Congress chose Gen. Artemas Ward Commander-in-Chief of the forces in Massachusetts Bay, and soon afterward named John Thomas Lieutenant-General. Both of those officers had seen some service during the preceding war.

The Provincial Congress, having adjourned from Concord to Watertown, resolved that an army of 30,000 men be immediately raised, and wrote to the Colonies of New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Connecticut, informing them of the events of the 19th, and earnestly requesting them to send forward as many troops as they could spare, with provisions, arms, and military stores. Gen. Israel Putnam, then sixty years of age, left his plough in the

field, and, with the Connecticut militia, hastened to join his countrymen in arms; and Capt. Benedict Arnold, of New Haven, afterward of so much notoriety, was soon in camp with his company. The provincial headquarters were at Cambridge.

A large body of men was soon collected before Boston, but they were in great want of everything necessary for the equipment of an army. They had muskets, many of them old and rusty, but were ill-provided with bayonets. They had a few pieces of artillery and a few mortars, with some balls and shells, but had only forty-one barrels of gunpowder in the public store.

The battle of Lexington operated like an electrical shock throughout the provinces. On hearing of that event, even in New York, where the friends of the ministry were more numerous than in any other place, the people laid aside their indecision and espoused the cause of their countrymen. They shut up the custom house and stopped all vessels preparing to sail to Quebec, Newfoundland, Georgia,* or Boston. They also addressed a letter to the lord mayor, aldermen, and common council of the city of London, in which they declared that all the horrors of civil war would not compel the Americans to submit to taxation by authority of the British Parliament; and expressed a confident hope that the citizens of London would exert themselves to restore union and peace to the empire.

The colonists of New Jersey took possession of the treasury of the province, containing about £20,000, to employ it in their own defense. The inhabitants of Philadelphia followed the example of New York, and prevented the sailing of vessels to any port on the continent that acknowledged the authority or was subject to the power of Britain.

* Georgia at that time had not yet joined the united colonies by sending delegates to the Continental Congress.

In the space of six days intelligence of the battle of Lexington reached Baltimore in Maryland. The people instantly seized the provincial magazine, containing about 1,500 stand of arms, and stopped all exports to the fishing islands, to such of the Colonies as had declined to join the confederacy, and to the British army and navy at Boston.

In Virginia, a Provincial Congress had met, as we have seen, in the month of March, which took measures for training the militia, and recommended to each county to raise a volunteer company for the better defense of the country. At Williamsburg, the capital of the Colony, there was a small provincial magazine, containing upward of 1,000 pounds of gunpowder. On the night of the 20th of April, 1775, Lord Dunmore, the Governor, employed Henry Collins, the captain of an armed vessel, to convey the greater part of that powder on board his ship. Having got notice of the transaction, the citizens took the alarm, and the mayor and corporation addressed his lordship on the subject. He answered that he had removed the powder to a place of security, and assured them that, if it should be needed in order to suppress an insurrection, he would restore it in half an hour.

On this occasion Patrick Henry showed himself as prompt to act as he was earnest in exhorting others to action. He, as well as Washington, had taken part in training the militia, and had accepted the command of a company.

When news of Lord Dunmore's aggressive proceeding reached Hanover county, Henry, at the head of more than 150 volunteers, marched toward Williamsburg to demand restitution of the powder, and to protect the public treasury against a similar depredation. When within about fifteen miles of the capital, he was assured that the receiver-general would pay for the powder, and that the citizens would

guard the public treasury and magazine. The party then dispersed.

Lord Dunmore, greatly alarmed by Henry's march, converted his palace into a garrison, and issued a proclamation, charging the people with the design of altering the established Constitution. This was a new cause of exasperation; and the people, in their county meetings, not only approved Mr. Henry's proceedings, but retorted upon the Governor, attributing all the disturbances to his misconduct, and declaring that they only vindicated their rights, and opposed innovation. While the public mind was in this feverish state, intelligence of the battle of Lexington arrived in Virginia. It greatly increased the apprehensions and irritations of the people, and made them far more active in arming and training the militia and volunteer companies than they had formerly been. In Virginia, as well as in the other Colonies, many were much alarmed; but the apprehensions of impending danger were overpowered by feelings of indignation.

In this critical posture of affairs, Lord Dunmore convened the House of Burgesses.* His intention was to procure their approbation of Lord North's conciliatory plan; and in his speech at the opening of the session, he employed all his address to gain his end. But instead of complying with his recommendations, the House immediately appointed a committee to inquire into the causes of the late disturbances, and to examine the state of the public magazine. For the defense of the magazine, Lord Dunmore had ordered spring guns to be placed in it, without giving any public warning of the measure. Some inconsiderate young men, unapprised of their danger, attempted to furnish

* Washington, being at this time engaged in his duties at the second session of the Continental Congress in Philadelphia, was not present at this meeting of the House of Burgesses.

themselves with arms out of it; and one of them was wounded. This circumstance occasioned a violent ferment. A multitude of people assembled, broke into the magazine, and took out many of the arms; but some members of the House of Burgesses, having repaired to the spot, by their remonstrances prevailed on the people to restore them.

On the 7th of June, 1775, a report was spread about Williamsburg, that Captain Collins, of His Majesty's ship Magdalen, was coming up the river with about 100 men in several boats, to take possession of the town. A number of armed persons instantly assembled to defend the place and its inhabitants; but on learning that there was no occasion for their services, they quietly dispersed. The circumstance however made such a deep impression on the Governor's mind, that, with his lady and family, he quitted Williamsburg and proceeded to Yorktown, and went on board the Fowey man-of-war.

A correspondence, in some instances not a little acrimonious, now took place between his Lordship and the Council and Burgesses. He accused: they recriminated. They rejected Lord North's conciliatory plan; but passed the necessary bills, and entreated the Governor's attendance to give his assent to them, and to close the session. His lordship declined meeting them in the capital, and they did not choose to wait upon him on board a man-of-war. The correspondence terminated about the middle of July, when the Burgesses were obliged to separate, in order to attend to their private affairs; but they appointed a convention of delegates to meet and supply their place.

We must now advance a little beyond the general marck of events, in order to make a final disposition of the administration of Lord Dunmore in Virginia.

In August, 1775, the convention met, and showed itself animated by the common spirit of the country. About the

middle of the month, a petition from a number of merchants and others, chiefly natives of Scotland, praying that they might not be obliged to bear arms against their countrymen, and promising a strict neutrality in case the province should be invaded by British troops, was presented to the convention. That assembly recommended to the committees, and to the Colony in general, to treat with lenity and kindness all the inhabitants of the country who did not show themselves enemies of the American cause, and to cherish union and harmony among all ranks of people. But many of those petitioners having, contrary to their plighted faith, manifested a decided preference to the royal cause, the recommendation in their favor was soon revoked. Before dissolving itself, the convention issued a declaration setting forth the reasons of its meeting, and showing the necessity of immediately putting the country in a posture of defense.

Having been joined by a number of loyal colonists and fugitive slaves, Lord Dunmore very imprudently began a system of predatory warfare. By mutual insults and injuries, the minds of both parties became much exasperated. At length the Governor attempted to burn the town of Hampton; but on the morning of the 27th of October, 1775, just as he began a furious cannonade upon it, a body of riflemen from Williamsburg, who had marched all night, entered the place, and being joined by some of their countrymen, took such an advantageous position, that with their smallarms, they compelled his lordship to retreat, with the loss of some of his men and one of his vessels.

Infuriated by this repulse, Lord Dunmore had recourse to a measure more expressive of his exasperated feelings than of loyal zeal or patriotic wisdom. He issued a proclamation declaring the province under martial law; requiring all persons capable of bearing arms to repair to the

royal standard, under the penalty of being considered traitors if they disobeyed, and promising freedom to all indented servants, negroes, and others belonging to rebels, on their joining His Majesty's troops.

In consequence of this proclamation, his lordship soon found himself at the head of some hundreds of fugitive negroes and others at Norfolk; but the proclamation highly incensed the great body of the Virginians, and alienated the minds of many who had hitherto been friendly to the British claims. Being informed that a number of armed colonists was rapidly advancing against him, Lord Dunmore took possession of the great bridge near Norfolk; a post of much importance for protecting his friends, and frustrating the designs of his enemies. On arriving near the bridge, the Virginians, commanded by Colonel Woodford, instead of attempting to force a passage, fortified themselves at a short distance on the other side of Elizabeth River; and in this position the two parties faced each other for several days.

The impatient impetuosity of Lord Dunmore's temper could ill brook to be thus braved by the colonists, whom he despised; and he determined to dislodge them. Accordingly, early in the morning of the 8th of December, 1775, Captain Fordyce of the Fourteenth Regiment, at the head of a royalist detachment, left Norfolk, and reached the bridge before daybreak. He silently replaced the planks of the bridge which had been removed. The road between the bridge and the American breastwork, which was on the south of the river, was a narrow causeway, through swampy ground; and on the right, within musket-shot of the causeway, was a thicket, where the Americans had posted a small party. At daybreak Captain Fordyce, at the head of his detachment, with fixed bayonets, passed the bridge and proceeded rapidly toward the enemy. But

the Americans were not unprepared; they however allowed the troops to advance a good way without molestation, and when near the works, poured upon them a destructive discharge of musketry, both from the intrenchment and thicket at the same time. Undismayed by this warm reception, Captain Fordyce steadily advanced; but on the second fire he fell dead within a few yards of the American works. His party instantly retreated, sixty-two of their number being killed or wounded, while the Americans had only one man slightly hurt.

Next night Lord Dunmore quitted his post and with his adherents sought refuge on board the shipping in the river. The Americans took possession of the town and refused to supply the ships with provisions. Exasperated by this refusal, early in the morning of the 1st of January, 1776, Lord Dunmore began a furious cannonade on the town, and sent parties of sailors and marines ashore, who set fire to the houses nearest the water. The flames spread rapidly among the wooden buildings; a great part of the town was consumed; and the Americans themselves afterward destroyed the rest of it, that it might afford no shelter to the royal troops. Thus perished Norfolk, the most flourishing commercial town of Virginia.

While these operations were going on, Lord Dunmore entertained hopes of subduing the Colony by the agency of an adventurer named John Connelly, a native of Pennsylvania. This man, having concerted measures with his lordship, and having received encouragement from General Gage also, communicated with such militia officers as he thought most likely to enter into his views, promising them, in the name of his lordship, ample rewards. He engaged the Indians on the Ohio to act in concert with him; and he was to be assisted by the garrisons of Fort Detroit, and Fort Gage in the Illinois. Having collected a force

on the western frontier, he was to penetrate through Virginia, and meet his lordship at Alexandria, on the Potomac, in April, 1776. But about ten days after taking leave of Lord Dunmore, Connelly was apprehended; his papers were seized; the plot was fully discovered, and entirely frustrated. Lord Dunmore, finding all his efforts ineffectual, and being unable to remain any longer on the coast, sailed with the force under his command to join General Howe.

We now return to the seat of active operations in the Northern Colonies. The battle of Lexington had given a powerful impulse to the persecution of hostilities against the British forces wherever they might be found, and the forts, magazines, and arsenals were speedily seized upon by the people in all directions. One of the most important of these enterprises, undertaken by volunteers, was that by which the capture of Ticonderoga and Crown Point was effected. The idea of seizing upon these fortresses, which were full of munitions of war, and very feebly garrisoned, had been conceived by two remarkable men at about the same time. These were Col. Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold. The former was a native of Connecticut, brought up in the region then called the New Hampshire Grants (the future State of Vermont), where he was a leading man among the "Green Mountain Boys." The latter had already been promoted to the rank of colonel by the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts.

On the 2d of May, 1775, a party of volunteers, 270 strong, assembled at Castleton, near Lake Champlain, and chose Ethan Allen for their leader, with James Easton and Seth Warner as second and third in command. After taking measures to secure the boats on the lake, they were joined by Arnold, who as he had a colonel's commission from Massachusetts, claimed the command; but the Ver-

monters refused flatly, and he was forced to serve as volunteer or not at all.

The party arrived at Shoreham, opposite Ticonderoga, on the night of the 9th of May. Never dreaming of such a thing as an attack, the vigilance of the garrison was quite relaxed. Having obtained a boy named Nathan Beman as a guide, Allen and Arnold crossed over during the night with only eighty-three of their men, the rest being unable to follow them for want of a supply of boats.

Landed under the walls of the fort, they found their position extremely critical; the dawn was beginning to break, and unless they could succeed in instantly surprising the garrison, they ran themselves the most imminent risk of capture.

Ethan Allen did not hesitate a moment, but drawing up his men, briefly explained to them the position of affairs, and then with Arnold by his side, hurried up immediately to the sally port. The sentinel snapped his fusee at them, and rushing into the fort, the Americans followed close at his heels, and entering the open parade, awoke the sleeping garrison with three hearty cheers. The English soldiers started from their beds, and rushing below, were immediately taken prisoners. Meanwhile Allen attended by his guide, hurried up to the chamber of the commandant, Captain Delaplace, who was in bed, and knocking at his door with the hilt of his huge sword, ordered him in a stentorian voice to make his instant appearance, or the entire garrison should immediately be put to death. The commandant appeared at his door half dressed, "the frightened face of his pretty wife peering over his shoulder." Gazing in bewildered astonishment at Allen, he exclaimed: "By whose authority do you act?" "In the name of the Great Jehovah, and the Continental Congress!" replied Allen. There was no alternative, and Delaplace surren-

dered. Two days afterward Crown Point was surprised and taken. More than two hundred pieces of artillery, and a large and valuable supply of powder, which was greatly needed, fell into the hands of the Americans. Ethan Allen next surprised and captured Skenesborough, now Whitehall.

Arnold now insisted upon taking the command of Fort Ticonderoga, by virtue of his commission from Massachusetts. But he was again resisted by the "Green Mountain Boys;" and a committee of the Connecticut Legislature gave the command to Allen, till the determination of Congress on the subject could be had; while Arnold sent a protest to the Massachusetts Legislature. The two commanders however engaged together in the project for capturing St. John's on the Sorel river, the frontier post of Canada. This they had nearly accomplished by means of an armed schooner and some batteaux, in which they crossed the lake; but the arrival of strong reinforcements from Montreal and Chamblee defeated this project. Nevertheless, by the capture of Ticonderoga and Crown Point, Allen and Arnold, as a British writer admits, "had got into their hands the keys of Canada."

PART IV.

WASHINGTON COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

CHAPTER I.

WASHINGTON AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

1775.

IT has already been mentioned that Congress, previous to its dissolution on the 26th of October, 1774, recommended the Colonies to choose members for another to meet on the 10th of May, 1775, unless the redress of their grievances should previously be obtained. A circular letter had been addressed by Lord Dartmouth to the several Colonial Governors, requesting their interference to prevent the meeting of this second Congress; but ministerial requisitions had lost their influence. Delegates were elected, not only for the twelve Colonies that were before represented, but also for the parish of St. John's, in Georgia, and in July following, for the whole province.

The time of the meeting of this second Congress was fixed at so distant a day that an opportunity might be afforded for obtaining information of the plans adopted by the British Parliament in the winter of 1774–75. Had these been favorable, the delegates would either not have met, or dispersed after a short session; but as the resolution was then fixed to compel the submission of the Col-

onies, and hostilities had already commenced, the meeting of Congress on the 10th of May, which was at first eventual, became fixed.

On their meeting (May 10, 1775), they chose Peyton Randolph for their president, and Charles Thompson for their secretary. On the next day, Hancock laid before them a variety of depositions, proving that the King's troops were the aggressors in the late battle at Lexington, together with sundry papers relative to the great events which had lately taken place in Massachusetts; whereupon Congress resolved itself into a committee of the whole to take into consideration the state of America. They proceeded in the same line of moderation and firmness which marked the acts of their predecessors in the past year.

The city and county of New York having applied to Congress for advice, how they should conduct themselves with regard to the troops expected to land there, they were advised "to act on the defensive so long as might be consistent with their safety; to permit the troops to remain in the barracks so long as they behaved peaceably, but not to suffer fortifications to be erected, or any steps to be taken for cutting off the communications between the town and country." Congress also resolved: "That exportation to all parts of British America, which had not adopted their association, should immediately cease;" and that "no provision of any kind, or other necessaries, be furnished to the British fisheries on the American coasts." And "that no bill of exchange, draft, or order, of any officer in the British army or navy, their agents or contractors, be received or negotiated, or any money supplied them, by any person in America; that no provisions or necessaries of any kind be furnished or supplied, to or for the use of the British army or navy, in the Colony of Massachusetts Bay; that no vessel employed in transporting

British troops to America, or from one part of North America to another, or warlike stores or provisions for said troops, be freighted or furnished with provisions or any necessaries."

These resolutions may be considered as the counterpart of the British acts for restraining the commerce, and prohibiting the fisheries of the Colonies. They were calculated to bring distress on the British islands in the West Indies, whose chief dependence for subsistence was on the importation of provisions from the American continent.

They also occasioned new difficulties in the support of the British army and fisheries. The colonists were so much indebted to Great Britain, that government bills for the most part found among them a ready market. A war in the Colonies was therefore made subservient to commerce, by increasing the sources of remittance. This enabled the mother country, in a great degree, to supply her troops without shipping money out of the kingdom.

From the operation of these resolutions, advantages of this nature were not only cut off, but the supply of the British army rendered both precarious and expensive. In consequence of the interdiction of the American fisheries, great profits were expected by British adventurers in that line. Such frequently found it most convenient to obtain supplies in America for carrying on their fisheries; but as Great Britain had deprived the colonists of all benefits from that quarter, they now, in their turn, interdicted all supplies from being furnished to British fishermen. To obviate this unexpected embarrassment, several of the vessels employed in this business were obliged to return home, to bring out provisions for their associates. These restrictive resolutions were not so much the effect of resentment as of policy. The colonists conceived that by distressing

MAJOR-GENERAL HENRY KNOX.

the British commerce they would increase the number of those who would interest themselves in their behalf.

The new Congress had convened but a few days when their venerable president, Peyton Randolph, was under a necessity of returning home, to occupy his place as speaker of the Virginia Assembly. On his departure, John Hancock was unanimously chosen his successor. The objects of deliberation presented to this new Congress were, if possible, more important than those of the preceding year. The colonists had now experienced the inefficacy of those measures from which relief had been formerly obtained. They found a new Parliament disposed to run all risks in enforcing their submission. They also understood that administration was united against them, and its members firmly established in their places. Hostilities were commenced. Reinforcements had arrived, and more were daily expected. Added to this, they had information that their adversaries had taken measures to secure the friendship and co-operation of the Indians, and also of the Canadians.

The coercion of the Colonies being resolved upon, and their conquest supposed to be inevitable, the British ministry judged that it would be for the interest of both countries to proceed in that vigorous course, which bid fairest for the speediest attainment of their object. They hoped by pressing the colonists on all quarters to intimidate opposition, and ultimately to lessen the effusion of human blood.

In this awful crisis, Congress had but a choice of difficulties. The New England States had already organized an army and blockaded General Gage. To desert them would have been contrary to plighted faith and to sound policy. To support them would make the war general, and involve all the provinces in one general, promiscuous state of hostility.

The resolution of the people in favor of the latter was fixed, and only wanted public sanction for its operation. Congress therefore resolved, "that for the express purpose of defending and securing the Colonies, and preserving them in safety, against all attempts to carry the late acts of Parliament into execution, by force of arms, they be immediately put in a state of defense; but as they wished for a restoration of the harmony formerly subsisting between the mother country and the Colonies, to the promotion of this most desirable reconciliation, an humble and dutiful petition be presented to His Majesty." To resist and to petition were coeval resolutions. As freemen they could not tamely submit; but as loyal subjects, wishing for peace as far as was compatible with their rights, they once more, in the character of petitioners, humbly stated their grievances to the common sovereign of the empire.

To dissuade the Canadians from co-operating with the British, they again addressed them, representing the pernicious tendency of the Quebec act, and apologizing for their taking Ticonderoga and Crown Point, as measures which were dictated by the great law of self-preservation. About the same time, Congress took measures for warding off the danger that threatened their frontier inhabitants from Indians. Commissioners to treat with them were appointed, and a supply of goods for their use was ordered. A talk was also prepared by Congress, and transmitted to them, in which the controversy between Great Britain and her Colonies was explained, in a familiar Indian style. They were told that they had no concern in the family quarrel, and were urged by the ties of ancient friendship and a common birthplace, to remain at home, keep their hatchet buried deep, and to join neither side.

The novel situation of Massachusetts made it necessary for the ruling powers of that province to ask the advice of Congress on a very interesting subject: "The taking up

and exercising the powers of civil government." For many months they had been kept together in tolerable peace and order by the force of ancient habits, under the simple style of recommendation and advice from popular bodies, invested with no legislative authority. But as war now raged in their borders, and a numerous army was actually raised, some more efficient form of government became necessary. At this early day it neither comported with the wishes nor the designs of the colonists to erect forms of government independent of Great Britain. Congress therefore recommended only such regulations as were immediately necessary, and these were conformed as near as possible to the spirit and substance of the charter, and were only to last till a Governor of His Majesty's appointment would consent to govern the Colony according to its charter.

On the same principles of necessity, another assumption of new powers became unavoidable. The great intercourse that daily took place throughout the Colonies pointed out the propriety of establishing a general post-office. This was accordingly done, and Dr. Franklin, who had by royal authority been dismissed from a similar employment about three years before, was appointed by his country the head of the new department.

While Congress was making arrangements for their proposed continental army, it was thought expedient once more to address the inhabitants of Great Britain, and to publish to the world a declaration setting forth their reasons for taking up arms; to address the speaker and gentlemen of the Assembly of Jamaica, and the inhabitants of Ireland, and also to prefer a second humble petition to the King. In their address to the inhabitants of Great Britain, they again vindicated themselves from the charge of aiming at independence, professed their willingness to

submit to the several acts of trade and navigation which were passed before the year 1763, recapitulated their reasons for rejecting Lord North's conciliatory motion, stated the hardships they suffered from the operations of the royal army in Boston, and insinuated the danger the inhabitants of Britain would be in of losing their freedom, in case their American brethren were subdued.

In their declaration setting forth the causes and necessity of their taking up arms, they enumerated the injuries they had received, and the methods taken by the British ministry to compel their submission, and then said: "We are reduced to the alternative of choosing an unconditional submission to the tyranny of irritated ministers, or resistance by force. The latter is our choice. We have counted the cost of this contest, and find nothing so dreadful as voluntary slavery." They asserted "that foreign assistance was undoubtedly attainable." This was not founded on any private information, but was an opinion derived from their knowledge of the principles of policy by which States usually regulate their conduct toward each other.

In their address to the speaker and gentlemen of the Assembly of Jamaica, they dilated on the arbitrary systems of the British ministry, and informed them that in order to obtain a redress of their grievances, they had appealed to the justice, humanity, and interest of Great Britain. They stated that to make their schemes of nonimportation and nonexportation produce the desired effects, they were obliged to extend them to the islands. "From that necessity, and from that alone," they said, "our conduct has proceeded." They concluded with saying, "The peculiar situation of your island forbids your assistance, but we have your good wishes; from the good wishes of the friends of liberty and mankind we shall always derive consolation."

In their address to the people of Ireland they recapitu-

lated their grievances, stated their humble petitions, and the neglect with which they had been treated. "In defense of our persons and properties under actual violations," said they, "we have taken up arms. When that violence shall be removed, and hostilities cease on the part of the aggressors, they shall cease on our part also."

These several addresses were executed in a masterly manner, and were well calculated to make friends to the Colonies. But their petition to the King, which was drawn up at the same time, produced more solid advantages in favor of the American cause than any other of their productions. This was, in a great measure, carried through Congress by John Dickinson. Several members, judging from the violence with which Parliament proceeded against the Colonies, were of opinion that further petitions were nugatory; but this worthy citizen, a friend to both countries, and devoted to a reconciliation on constitutional principles, urged the expediency and policy of trying once more the effect of an humble, decent, and firm petition, to the common head of the empire. The high opinion that was conceived of his patriotism and abilities induced the members to assent to this measure, though they generally conceived it to be labor lost.

The petition agreed upon was the work of Dickinson's pen. In this, among other things, it was stated, "that notwithstanding their sufferings, they had retained too high a regard for the kingdom from which they derived their origin, to request such a reconciliation as might in any manner be inconsistent with her dignity and welfare. Attached to His Majesty's person, family, and government, with all the devotion that principle and affection can inspire; connected with Great Britain by the strongest ties that can unite society, and deploring every event that tended in any degree to weaken them, they not only most

fervently desired the former harmony between her and the Colonies to be restored, but that a concord might be established between them upon so firm a basis as to perpetuate its blessings, uninterrupted by any future dissensions, to succeeding generations, in both countries.

"They therefore besought that His Majesty would be pleased to direct some mode by which the united applications of his faithful colonists to the throne, in pursuance of their common councils, might be improved into a happy and permanent reconciliation." By this last clause Congress meant that the mother country should propose a plan for establishing by compact something like Magna Charta for the Colonies. They did not aim at a total exemption from the control of Parliament, nor were they unwilling to contribute, in their own way, to the expenses of government; but they feared the horrors of war less than submission to unlimited parliamentary supremacy. They wished for an amicable compact, in which doubtful, undefined points should be ascertained so as to secure that proportion of authority and liberty which would be for the general good of the whole empire. They fancied themselves in the condition of the barons at Runnymede; but with this difference, that in addition to opposing the King they had also to oppose the Parliament. This difference was more nominal than real, for in the latter case the King and Parliament stood precisely in the same relation to the people of America which subsisted in the former between the King and people of England. In both, popular leaders were contending with the sovereign for the privileges of subjects.

This well-meant petition was presented on September 1, 1775, by Mr. Penn and Mr. Lee, and on the 4th, Lord Dartmouth informed them, "that to it no answer would be given." This slight contributed not a little to the union

and perseverance of the colonists. When pressed by the calamities of war, a doubt would sometimes arise in the minds of scrupulous persons, that they had been too hasty in their opposition to their protecting parent State. To such it was usual to present the second petition of Congress to the King, with the remark, that all the blood and all the guilt of the war must be charged on British, and not on American, councils. Meantime the colonists were accused in a speech from the throne, on October 26th, as meaning only "to amuse by vague expressions of attachment to the parent State, and the strongest protestations of loyalty to their King, while they were preparing for a general revolt, and that their rebellious war was manifestly carried on for the purpose of establishing an independent empire."

Yet at that time, and for months after, a redress of grievances was their ultimate aim. Conscious of this intention, and assenting in the sincerity of their souls to the submissive language of their petition, they illy brooked the contempt with which their joint supplication was treated, and still worse, that they should be charged from the throne with studied duplicity.

Nothing contributes more to the success of revolutions than moderation. Intemperate zealots overshoot themselves, and soon spend their force, while the calm and dispassionate persevere to the end. The bulk of the people in civil commotions are influenced to a choice of sides by the general complexion of the measures adopted by the respective parties. When these appear to be dictated by justice and prudence, and to be uninfluenced by passion, ambition, or avarice, they are disposed to favor them. Such was the effect of this second petition, through a long and trying war, in which men of serious reflection were often called upon to examine the rectitude of their conduct.

The time had now arrived when the several middle and southern provinces were required definitively to resolve, and unequivocally to declare, whether they would make common cause with the New England provinces in actual war, or, abandoning them and the object for which they had all so long jointly contended, submit to the absolute supremacy of the British Parliament. The Congress, as we have just seen, did not hesitate which part of the alternative to embrace, but had already (May 26, 1775), unanimously determined, that as hostilities had actually commenced, and large reinforcements of the British army were expected, the several provinces should be immediately *put in a state of defense.*

Accordingly, the necessary committees were appointed to prepare reports on this most important of all subjects. A very significant token that the real character and abilities of Washington were understood and appreciated by Congress is afforded in the fact that he was named as chairman of all these committees. One of them was to designate the posts to be occupied in New York; another, to recommend methods for raising ammunition and military stores; a third, to estimate the amount of money necessary to be raised for purposes of defense; and a fourth, to prepare rules and regulations for the government of the army.*

Congress thus very properly took the whole system of national defense into its own hands; and thenceforward the forces under its direction were styled the *Continental Army*, while the British forces under General Gage were called the *Ministerial Army.*

The next subject which received the attention of Congress was the appointment of a Commander-in-Chief of the American armies. This was a matter of great difficulty and delicacy, involving not only personal but political

* Sparks.

considerations. The facts that war was actually raging in New England, that a large army was embodied in the neighborhood of Boston, and that General Ward, an officer of experience and ability, was in command of it, as well as the leading part which Massachusetts had taken since the opening of the contest, seemed to establish the propriety of taking a Commander-in-Chief from that part of the country; and that General Ward should be the man. His name was accordingly among the first which were suggested and canvassed by the members in their private consultations on the subject. In fact, to supersede him in the command of the army before Boston, where the Commander-in-Chief would necessarily commence his operations, might seem uncourteous, and might even give offense to the army, and to the eastern Colonies.

On the other hand, Washington, from the circumstance of his having taken so active a part in the first Congress, was personally well known to most of the members of the second, and his superior administrative talents could not have escaped their notice; while his great abilities as a military commander, his courage, coolness, and presence of mind in great emergencies, were known to all the world. He was known also to be man of large fortune, which would all be staked on the success of the cause of liberty.

To these personal qualities in his favor, were added certain political considerations of no ordinary weight. Virginia was a large, wealthy, and powerful State; she had ever been foremost in sustaining New England up to the present stage of the contest. Her generous devotion to the cause of liberty had ever been conspicuous, and her commanding influence had carried the whole South with her. The far-sighted New England statesmen saw that to place her favorite at the head of the armies would be a master-stroke of policy; binding her and the other southern Colonies most firmly to the cause.

John Adams, in his diary, informs us that there was a southern party in Congress opposed to giving the command to any New England officer.

"Whether this jealously was sincere," writes he, "or whether it was mere pride, and a haughty ambition of furnishing a southern general to command a northern army, I cannot say; but the intention was very visible to me, that Colonel Washington was their object; and so many of our stanchest men were in the plan, that we could carry nothing without conceding to it. There was another embarrassment which was never publicly known, and which was carefully concealed by those who knew it; the Massachusetts and other New England delegates were divided. Mr. Hancock and Mr. Cushing hung back; Mr. Paine did not come forward, and even Mr. Samuel Adams was irresolute. Mr. Hancock himself had an ambition to be appointed Commander-in-Chief. Whether he thought an election a compliment due to him, and intended to have the honor of declining it, or whether he would have accepted it, I know not. To the compliment, he had some pretensions; for at that time his exertions, sacrifices, and general merits in the cause of his country, had been incomparably greater than those of Colonel Washington. But the delicacy of his health, and his entire want of experience in actual service, though an excellent militia officer, were decisive objections to him in my mind."

Adams, after ample opportunities of consultation with the other members from the North, in which he demonstrated the true policy of choosing Washington, considering the matter in a political point of view, and no doubt very fully convinced of the superiority of the Virginian officer's personal claims, at length felt sure of his ground, and ventured to allude to the matter in open debate. Accordingly, while discussions were going on in Congress respecting military preparations, he rose in his place, and

moved that the army then besieging the British troops in Boston should forthwith be adopted by Congress as a continental army, and a general appointed. The time for naming the person, he said, was not come.

"Yet," says he, "as I had reason to believe this was a point of some difficulty, I had no hesitation to declare, that I had but one gentleman in my mind for that important command, and that was a gentleman from Virgina, who was among us, and very well known to all of us; a gentleman whose skill and experience as an officer, whose independent fortune, great talents, and excellent universal character, would command the approbation of all America, and unite the cordial exertions of all the Colonies better than any other person in the Union. Mr. Washington, who happened to sit near the door, as soon as he heard me allude to him, from his usual modesty, darted into the library room. Mr. Hancock, who was our president, which gave me an opportunity to observe his countenance while I was speaking of the state of the Colonies, the army at Cambridge, and the enemy, heard me with visible pleasure; but when I came to describe Washington for the commander, I never remarked a more sudden and striking change of countenance. Mortification and resentment were expressed as forcibly as his face could exhibit them."

When the subject came under debate, several delegates opposed the appointment of Washington; not from personal objections, but because the army were all from New England, and had a general of their own, Gen. Artemas Ward, with whom they appeared well satisfied, and under whose command they had proved themselves able to imprison the British army in Boston — which was all that was to be expected or desired.

On a subsequent day, Washington was nominated by Mr. Thomas Johnson, of Maryland, and he was unanimously chosen by ballot (June 15, 1775). Immediately

after the result was declared, the House adjourned. As soon as the session was opened on the following day, the president communicated to him officially the notice of his appointment. Washington immediately rose in his place, and made the following reply:

"MR. PRESIDENT.— Though I am truly sensible of the high honor done me in this appointment, yet I feel great distress from a consciousness that my abilities and military experience may not be equal to the extensive and important trust; however, as the Congress desire it, I will enter upon the momentous duty, and exert every power I possess in their service and for support of the glorious cause. I beg they will accept my most cordial thanks for this distinguished testimony of their approbation.

"But, lest some unlucky event should happen unfavorable to my reputation, I beg it may be remembered by every gentleman in the room, that I this day declare with the utmost sincerity, I do not think myself equal to the command I am honored with.

"As to pay, sir, I beg leave to assure the Congress, that as no pecuniary consideration could have tempted me to accept this arduous employment, at the expense of my domestic ease and happiness, I do not wish to make any profit from it. I will keep an exact account of my expenses. Those, I doubt not, they will discharge, and that is all I desire."

A special commission* was drawn up and presented to

* Washington's Commission from the Continental Congress of 1775, as Commander-in-Chief.

The delegates of the United Colonies of New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the counties of Newcastle, Kent, and Sussex on Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina:

To George Washington, Esq.:

We, reposing special trust and confidence in your patriotism, valor, conduct, and fidelity, do by these presents constitute and

him, and at the same time a unanimous resolution was adopted by Congress: "That they would maintain and assist him, and adhere to him with their lives and fortunes, in the cause of American liberty." Instructions were also given him for his government, by which, after reciting various particulars, he was directed "to destroy or make prisoners of all persons who now are, or who hereafter shall appear, in arms against the good people of the Colonies;" but the whole was summed up in authorizing him "to order and dispose of the army under his command as might be most advantageous for obtaining the end for which it had been raised, making it his special care in the discharge of the great trust committed to him that the liberties of America received no detriment." About the same time, twelve companies of riflemen were ordered to be raised in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. The

appoint you to be General and Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the United Colonies, and of all the forces now raised, or to be raised, by them, and of all others who shall voluntarily offer their service, and join the said army for the defense of American liberty, and for repelling every hostile invasion thereof; and you are hereby invested with full power and authority to act as you shall think for the good and welfare of the service.

And we do hereby strictly charge and require all officers and soldiers under your command to be obedient to your orders and diligent in the exercise of their several duties.

And we also enjoin and require you to be careful in executing the great trust reposed in you, by causing strict discipline to be observed in the army, and that the soldiers be duly exercised and provided with all convenient necessaries.

And you are to regulate your conduct in every respect by the rules and discipline of war (as herewith given you), and punctually to observe and follow such orders and directions from time to time as you shall receive from this or a future Congress of these United Colonies, or by committee of Congress.

This commission to continue in force until revoked by us, or by a future Congress.

men to the amount of 1,430 were procured and forwarded with great expedition. They had to march from 400 to 700 miles, and yet the whole business was completed, and they joined the American army at Cambridge, in less than two months from the day on which the first resolution for raising them was agreed to.

Coeval with the resolution for raising an army, on June 22, 1775, was another for emitting a sum not exceeding two millions of Spanish milled dollars in bills of credit for the defense of America, and the Colonies were pledged for the redemption of them. This sum was increased from time to time by further emissions. The Colonies, having neither money nor revenues at their command, were forced to adopt this expedient, the only one which was in their power for supporting an army. No one delegate opposed the measure. So great had been the credit of the former emissions of paper in the greater part of the Colonies, that very few at that time foresaw or apprehended the consequences of unfunded paper emissions; but had all the consequences which resulted from this measure in the course of the war been foreseen, it must, notwithstanding, have been adopted, for it was a less evil that there should be a general wreck of property, than that the essential rights and liberties of a growing country be lost. A happy ignorance of future events, combined with the ardor of the times, prevented many reflections on this subject, and gave credit and circulation to these bills of credit.

Soon after General Washington was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the American army, four major-generals, one adjutant-general, with the rank of a brigadier, and eight brigadier-generals were appointed in subordination to him, which were as follows:

1st, Maj.-Gen. Artemas Ward; 2d, Charles Lee; 3d,

Philip Schuyler; 4th, Israel Putnam; adjutant-general, Horatio Gates.

The eight brigadiers were: 1st, Seth Pomeroy; 2d, Richard Montgomery; 3d, David Wooster; 4th, William Heath; 5th, Joseph Spencer; 6th, John Thomas; 7th, John Sullivan; 8th, Nathaniel Greene.

We forbear at this time to comment upon these appointments, more especially as every name in the list will hereafter claim the reader's attention in connection with illustrious actions performed during the Revolutionary War.

Washington's inmost feelings in regard to the important and arduous duties which he was about to undertake as Commander-in-Chief are expressed in the following letter to Mrs. Washington:

"My Dearest.— I am now set down to write to you on a subject which fills me with inexpressible concern, and this concern is greatly aggravated and increased when I reflect upon the uneasiness I know it will give you. It has been determined in Congress that the whole army raised for the defense of the American cause shall be put under my care, and that it is necessary for me to proceed immediately to Boston to take upon me the command.

"You may believe me, my dear Patsy, when I assure you in the most solemn manner, that, so far from seeking this appointment, I have used every endeavor in my power to avoid it, not only from my unwillingness to part with you and the family, but from a consciousness of its being a trust too great for my capacity, and that I should enjoy more real happiness in one month with you at home than I have the most distant prospect of finding abroad, if my stay were to be seven times seven years. But as it has been a kind of destiny that has thrown me upon this service, I shall hope that my undertaking is designed to answer some good purpose. You might, and I suppose

did, perceive, from the tenor of my letters, that I was apprehensive I could not avoid this appointment, as I did not pretend to intimate when I should return. That was the case. It was utterly out of my power to refuse this appointment without exposing my character to such censures as would have reflected dishonor upon myself and given pain to my friends. This, I am sure, could not and ought not to be pleasing to you, and must have lessened me considerably in my own esteem. I shall rely therefore confidently on that Providence, which has heretofore preserved and been bountiful to me, not doubting but that I shall return safe to you in the fall. I shall feel no pain from the toil or the danger of the campaign; my unhappiness will flow from the uneasiness I know you will feel from being left alone. I therefore beg that you will summon your whole fortitude and pass your time as agreeably as possible. Nothing will give me so much sincere satisfaction as to hear this, and to hear it from your own pen. My earnest and ardent desire is that you would pursue any plan that is most likely to produce content and a tolerable degree of tranquillity; as it must add greatly to my uneasy feelings to hear that you are dissatisfied or complaining at what I really could not avoid."

[To John Parke Custis, his stepson, who had married Miss Nelly Calvert, Washington said in a letter of June 19, 1775:

"My great concern upon this occasion is the thought of leaving your mother under the uneasiness which this affair will throw her into. I therefore hope, expect, and indeed have no doubt, of your using every means in your power to keep up her spirits, by doing everything in your power to promote her quiet. I have, I must confess, very uneasy feelings on her account, but as it has been a kind of unavoidable necessity which has led me into this appoint-

ment, I shall more readily hope that success will attend it and crown our meetings with happiness.

"At any time, I hope it is unnecessary for me to say, that I am always pleased with your and Nelly's abidance at Mount Vernon; much less upon this occasion, when I think it absolutely necessary for the peace and satisfaction of your mother; a consideration which I have no doubt will have due weight with you both, and require no arguments to enforce.

"You must now take upon yourself the entire management of your own estate; it will no longer be in my power to assist you, nor is there any occasion for it, as you have never discovered a disposition to put it to a bad use.

"Great Britain seems determined to enforce us into war, and there will be at least 15,000 raised as a continental army."

To his friend and neighbor, Colonel Bassett, Washington wrote:

"May God grant that my acceptance may be attended with some good to the common cause, and without injury (from want of knowledge) to my own reputation. I can answer for but three things — a firm belief of the justice of our cause, close attention in the prosecution of it, and the strictest integrity. If these cannot supply the place of ability and experience, the cause will suffer, and more than probable my character along with it, as reputation derives its principal support from success; but it will be remembered, I hope, that no desire or insinuation of mine placed me in this situation. I shall not be deprived, therefore, of a comfort in the worst event, if I retain a consciousness of having acted to the best of my judgment."

To the captains of several independent companies in Virginia, Washington wrote, June 20, 1775:

"I am now about to bid adieu to the companies under your respective commands, at least for a while. I have launched into a wide and extensive field, too boundless for my abilities, and far, very far, beyond my experience. I am called, by the unanimous voice of the colonies, to the command of the continental army; an honor I did not aspire to; an honor I was solicitous to avoid, upon a full conviction of my inadequacy to the importance of the service. The partiality of the Congress, however, assisted by a political motive, rendered my reasons unavailing, and I shall tomorrow set out for the camp near Boston."

Mr. W. C. Ford very justly says here:

"The reply of the Independent Company of Alexandria to this letter is an evidence of the warm attachment of his friends, at the same time that it is remarkable for the sentiments it expresses, even at so late a day, in regard to conciliation with Great Britain: 'Your favor of the 20th ultimo,' they said, 'notifying us of your intended departure for the camp, we received, and, after transmitting copies to the different officers, to whom it was directed, we laid it before a full meeting of your company this day. At the same time that they deplore the unfortunate occasion that calls you, their patron, friend, and worthy citizen, from them and your more tender connexions, they beg your acceptance of their most hearty congratulations upon your appointment to the supreme military command of the American confederate forces. Firmly convinced, Sir, of your zealous attachment to the rights of your country, and those of mankind, and of your earnest desire that harmony and good will should again take place between us and our parent State, we well know that your every exertion will be invariably employed to preserve the one and effect the other.

"'We are to inform you, Sir, by desire of the company,

that if at any time you shall judge it expedient for them to join the troops at Cambridge, or to march elsewhere, they will cheerfully do it. We now recommend you to the favor of Him, by whom kings reign and princes decree justice, wishing all your counsels and operations to be directed by his gracious providence to a happy and lasting union between us and Great Britain.' The publication of this letter called out the following:

'Go, gallant Washington,
And when (all milder means withstood)
Ambition, tam'd by loss of blood,
Regains her reason; then on angels' wings,
Shall *peace* descend, and shouting greet,
With peals of joy, these happy climes.'

Pennsylvania Gazette, 26 July, 1775."

To his brother, John A. Washington, the new Commander-in-Chief wrote, June 20, 1775:

"I am now to bid adieu to you and to every kind of domestic ease for a while. I am embarked on a wide ocean, boundless in its prospect, and in which perhaps no safe harbor is to be found. I have been called upon by the unanimous voice of the Colonies to take the command of the Continental Army, an honor I neither sought after nor desired, as I am thoroughly convinced that it requires greater abilities and much more experience than I am master of to conduct a business so extensive in its nature and arduous in the execution. But the partiality of the Congress, joined to a political motive, left me without a choice; and I am now commissioned a general and Commander-in-Chief of all the forces now raised, or to be raised, for the defense of the united Colonies. That I may discharge the trust to the satisfaction of my employers is my first wish; that I shall aim to do it, there remains

little doubt. How far I may succeed is another point; but this I am sure of, that in the worst event I shall have the consolation of knowing, if I act to the best of my judgment, that the blame ought to lodge upon the appointers, not the appointed, as it was by no means a thing of my own seeking, or proceeding from any hint of my friends.

"I am at liberty to inform you that the Congress, in a committee (which will I dare say be agreed to when reported), have consented to a Continental currency; have ordered two millions of dollars to be struck for the payment of the troops, etc.; and have voted 15,000 men as a Continental army, which number will be augmented, as the strength of the British troops will be greater than was expected at the time of passing that vote. I expect to set out tomorrow for Boston, and hope to be joined there in a little time by ten companies of riflemen from this province, Maryland, and Virginia.

"I shall hope that my friends will visit, and endeavor to keep up the spirits of my wife, as much as they can, as my departure will, I know, be a cutting stroke to her; and on this account alone I have many disagreeable sensations. I hope you and my sister, although the distance is great, will find as much leisure this summer as to spend a little time at Mount Vernon.

"My sincere regards attend you both, and the little ones, and I am your most affectionate brother."]

After receiving his commission as Commander-in-Chief, Washington lost no time in joining the army before Boston; but before following him to his post it is necessary to notice the important events which had transpired in that quarter during the session of Congress.

CHAPTER II.

BUNKER HILL.

1775.

WHILE Congress was in session the march of public sentiment toward the adoption of more decisive measures of hostility than had previously been deemed possible was steady and constant.

From a variety of circumstances the Americans had good reason to conclude that hostilities would soon be carried on vigorously in Massachusetts, and also to apprehend that, sooner or later, each province would be the theater of war. "The more speedily therefore," said they, "we are prepared for that event, the better chance we have for defending ourselves."

Previous to this period, or rather to the 19th of April, 1775, the dispute had been carried on by the pen, or at most, by associations and legislative acts; but from this time forward it was conducted by the sword. The crisis was arrived when the Colonies had no alternative but either to submit to the mercy or to resist the power of Great Britain.

An unconquerable love of liberty could not brook the idea of submission, while reason, more temperate in her decisions, suggested to the people their insufficiency to make effectual opposition. They were fully apprised of the power of Britain; they knew that her fleets covered the ocean, and that her flag had waved in triumph through the four quarters of the globe; but the animated language

of the time was, "It is better to die freemen than to live slaves." Though the justice of their cause and the inspiration of liberty gave, in the opinion of disinterested judges, a superiority to the writings of Americans, yet, in the art of literary composition, the candid among themselves acknowledged an inferiority. Their form of government was deficient in that decision, dispatch, and coercion which are necessary to military operations.

Europeans, from being generally unacquainted with firearms, are less easily taught the use of them than Americans, who are, from their youth, familiar with these instruments of war; yet, on other accounts, they are more susceptible of military habits. The proportion of necessitous men in the New World is small to that in the Old. To procure subsistence is a powerful motive with a European to enlist, and the prospect of losing it makes him afraid to neglect his duty; but these incitements to the punctual discharge of military services are wanting in America. In old countries, the distinction of ranks and the submission of inferiors to superiors generally takes place, but in the New World an extreme sense of liberty and equality indisposes to that implicit obedience which is the soul of an army. The same causes which nurtured a spirit of independence in the Colonies were hostile to their military arrangements.

It was not only from the different state of society in the two countries, but from a variety of local causes, that the Americans were not able to contend in arms on equal terms with their parent State. From the first settlement of the British Colonies agriculture and commerce, but especially the former, had been the favorite pursuits of the inhabitants. War was a business abhorrent from their usual habits of life. They had never engaged in it from their own motion, nor in any other mode than as append-

ages to British troops and under British establishments. By these means the military spirit of the Colonies had no opportunity of expanding itself.

At the commencement of hostilities the British troops possessed a knowledge of the science and discipline of war which could be acquired only by a long course of application and substantial establishments. Their equipments, their artillery, and every other part of their apparatus for war approached perfection. To these important circumstances was added a high national spirit of pride, which had been greatly augmented by their successes in their last contest with France and Spain.

On the other hand, the Americans were undisciplined, without experienced officers, and without the shadow of military establishments. In the wars which had been previously carried on, in or near the Colonies, the provincials had been, by their respective Legislatures, frequently added to the British troops; but the pride of the latter would not consider the former, who were without uniformity of dress or the pertness of military airs, to be their equals. The provincial troops were therefore for the most part assigned to services which, though laborious, were not honorable.

The ignorance of British generals, commanding in the woods of America, sometimes involved them in difficulties from which they had been more than once relieved by the superior local knowledge of the colonial troops. These services were soon forgotten, and the moment the troops who performed them could be spared they were disbanded. Such obstacles had hitherto depressed military talents in America, but they were now overcome by the ardor of the people.

In the year 1775 a martial spirit pervaded all ranks of men in the Colonies. They believed their liberties to be

in danger and were generally disposed to risk their lives for their establishment. Their ignorance of the military art prevented their weighing the chances of war with that exactness of calculation which, if indulged, might have damped their hopes. They conceived that there was little more to do than fight manfully for their country. They consoled themselves with the idea that though their first attempt might be unsuccessful, their numbers would admit of a repetition of the experiment till the invaders were finally exterminated. Not considering that in modern war the longest purse decides oftener than the longest sword, they feared not the wealth of Britain. They both expected and wished that the whole dispute would be speedily settled in a few decisive engagements.

Elevated with the love of liberty and buoyed above the fear of consequences by an ardent military enthusiasm, unabated by calculations about the extent, duration, or probable issue of the war, the people of America seconded the voice of their rulers in an appeal to Heaven for the vindication of their rights. At the time the Colonies adopted these spirited resolutions they possessed not a single ship of war nor so much as an armed vessel of any kind. It had often been suggested that their seaport towns lay at the mercy of the navy of Great Britain; this was both known and believed, but disregarded. The love of property was absorbed in the love of liberty.

The animated votaries of the equal rights of human nature consoled themselves with the idea that though their whole seacoast should be laid in ashes, they could retire to the western wilderness and enjoy the luxury of being free; on this occasion it was observed in Congress by Christopher Gadsden, one of the South Carolina delegates: "Our houses being constructed of brick, stone, and wood,

though destroyed, may be rebuilt; but liberty once gone is lost forever."

The sober discretion of the present age will more readily censure than admire, but can more easily admire than imitate, the fervid zeal of the patriots of 1775, who in idea sacrificed property in the cause of liberty with the ease that they now sacrifice almost every other consideration for the acquisition of property.

The revenues of Britain were immense, and her people were habituated to the payment of large sums in every form which contributions to government have assumed; but the American Colonies possessed neither money nor funds, nor were their people accustomed to taxes equal to the exigencies of war. The contest having begun about taxation, to have raised money by taxes for carrying it on would have been impolitic. The temper of the times precluded the necessity of attempting the dangerous expedient; for such was the enthusiasm of the day that the colonists gave up both their personal services and their property to the public on the vague promises that they should at a future time be reimbursed.

Without inquiring into the solidity of funds or the precise period of payment, the resources of the country were commanded on general assurances that all expenses of the war should ultimately be equalized. The parent State abounded with experienced statesmen and officers, but the dependent form of government exercised in the Colonies precluded their citizens from gaining that practical knowledge which is acquired from being at the head of public departments. There were very few in the Colonies who understood the business of providing for an army, and still fewer who had experience and knowledge to direct its operations. The disposition of the finances of the country and the most effectual mode of drawing forth its

resources were subjects with which scarce any of the inhabitants were acquainted. Arms and ammunition were almost wholly deficient, and though the country abounded with the materials of which they are manufactured, yet there was neither time nor artists enough to supply an army with the means of defense. The country was destitute both of fortifications and engineers.

Amidst so many discouragements there were some flattering circumstances. The war could not be carried on by Great Britain but to a great disadvantage, and at an immense expense. It was easy for ministers at St. James's to plan campaigns, but hard was the fate of the officer from whom the execution of them, in the woods of America, was expected. The country was so extensive and abounded so much with defiles that by evacuating and retreating the Americans, though they could not conquer, yet might save themselves from being conquered.

The authors of the acts of Parliament for restraining the trade of the Colonies were most excellent recruiting officers for the Congress. They imposed a necessity on thousands to become soldiers. All other business being suspended, the whole resources of the country were applied in supporting an army.

Though the colonists were without discipline, they possessed native valor. Though they had neither gold nor silver, they possessed a mine in the enthusiasm of their people. Paper, for upward of two years, produced to them more solid advantages than Spain derived from her superabounding precious metals. Though they had no ships to protect their trade or their towns, they had simplicity enough to live without the former and enthusiasm enough to risk the latter rather than submit to the power of Britain. They believed their cause to be just and that Heaven approved their exertions in defense of their rights. Zeal,

originating from such motives, supplied the place of discipline and inspired a confidence and military ardor which overleaped all difficulties.

Resistance being resolved upon by the Americans, the pulpit, the press, the bench, and the bar severally labored to unite and encourage them. The clergy of New England were a numerous, learned, and respectable body, who had a great ascendency over the minds of their hearers. They connected religion and patriotism, and, in their sermons and prayers, represented the cause of America as the cause of Heaven. The synod of New York and Philadelphia also sent forth a pastoral letter, which was publicly read in their churches. This earnestly recommended such sentiments and conduct as were suitable to their situation.

Writers and printers followed in the rear of the preachers and next to them had the greatest hand in animating their countrymen. Gentlemen of the bench and of the bar denied the charge of rebellion and justified the resistance of the colonists. A distinction, founded on law, between the King and his ministry, was introduced. The former, it was contended, could do no wrong. The crime of treason was charged on the latter for using the royal name to varnish their own unconstitutional measures. The phrase of a ministerial war became common and was used as a medium for reconciling resistance with allegiance.

Coeval with the resolutions for organizing an army was one appointing the 20th day of July, 1775, a day of public humiliation, fasting, and prayer to Almighty God "to bless their rightful sovereign King George, and to inspire him with wisdom to discern and pursue the true interest of his subjects; and that the British Nation might be influenced to regard the things that belonged to her peace,

before they were hid from her eyes; that the Colonies might be ever under the care and protection of a kind Providence, and be prospered in all their interests; that America might soon behold a gracious interposition of Heaven for the redress of her many grievances; the restoration of her invaded rights, a reconciliation with the parent State on terms constitutional and honorable to both."

The forces which had been collected in Massachusetts were stationed in convenient places for guarding the country from further excursions of the regulars from Boston. Breastworks were also erected in different places for the same purpose. While both parties were attempting to carry off stock from the several islands with which the bay of Boston is agreeably diversified, sundry skirmishes took place. These were of real service to the Americans. They habituated them to danger, and perhaps much of the courage of old soldiers is derived from an experimental conviction that the chance of escaping unhurt from engagements is much greater than young recruits suppose.

About the latter end of May, 1775, a great part of the reinforcements ordered from Great Britain arrived at Boston. Three British generals, Howe, Burgoyne, and Clinton, whose behavior in the preceding war had gained them great reputation, also arrived about the same time General Gage, thus reinforced, prepared for acting with more decision; but, before he proceeded to extremities, he conceived it due to ancient forms to issue a proclamation, holding forth to the inhabitants the alternative of peace or war. He therefore offered pardon, in the King's name, to all who should forthwith lay down their arms and return to their respective occupations and peaceable duties, excepting only from the benefit of that pardon "Samuel Adams and John Hancock, whose offenses were said to

be of too flagitious a nature to admit of any other consideration than that of condign punishment." He also proclaimed that not only the persons above named and excepted, but also all their adherents, associates, and correspondents should be deemed guilty of treason and rebellion and treated accordingly.

By this proclamation it was also declared, "that as the courts of judicature were shut, martial law should take place till a due course of justice should be re-established."

From the movements visible among the British troops, and their apparent preparations for some active enterprise, the Americans were led to believe that Gage designed to issue from Boston and penetrate into the interior of Massachusetts; whereupon, with a view to anticipate or derange the supposed project of attack, the Provincial Congress suggested to General Ward, who held the chief command of the army which blockaded Boston that measures should be taken for the defense of Dorchester Neck, and that a part of the American force should occupy an intrenched position on Bunker's Hill, which ascends from and commands the entrance of the peninsula of Charlestown.

Orders were accordingly communicated to Colonel Prescott, with a detachment of 1,000 men, to take possession of that eminence; but, through some misapprehension, Breed's Hill, instead of Bunker's Hill, was made the site of the projected intrenchment. By his conduct of this perilous enterprise and the heroic valor he displayed in the conflict that ensued, Prescott honorably signalized a name which his descendants have further adorned with the highest trophies of forensic and literary renown.

About 9 o'clock of the evening (June 16th), the detachment moved from Cambridge and, silently traversing

Charlestown Neck, gained the summit of Breed's Hill unobserved. This eminence is situated at the extremity of the peninsula nearest to Boston, and is so elevated as to overlook every part of that town, and so near it as to be within the reach of cannon shot.

The American troops, who were provided with intrenching tools, instantly commenced their work, which they pursued with such diligence that before the morning arrived they had thrown up a redoubt of considerable dimensions, and with such deep silence that, although the peninsula was nearly surrounded by British ships of war and transports, their operations were only first disclosed to the astonished army of Britain by the dispersion of the darkness of night, under whose shade they had been conducted.

At break of day (June 17th), the alarm was communicated at Boston by a cannonade, which the Lively, sloop of war, promptly directed against the intrenchments and embattled array of the Americans. A battery of six guns was soon after opened upon them from Copp's Hill, at the north end of Boston. Under an incessant shower of bullets and bombs, the American firmly and indefatigably persevered in their labor until they completed a small breastwork, extending from the east side of the redoubt to the bottom of the hill, toward the River Mystic.

We have remarked the mistake that occasioned a departure from the original plan of the American enterprise, and led to the assumption of Breed's Hill instead of the other eminence which it was first proposed to occupy. By a corresponding mistake, the memorable engagement which ensued has received the name of The Battle of Bunker Hill.

Gage, perceiving the necessity of dislodging the Americans from the position they had so suddenly and daringly assumed, detached, about noon, on this service, the gen-

erals Howe and Pigot, with ten companies of grenadiers, ten of light infantry and a suitable proportion of field artillery. These troops, crossing the narrow bay which lies between Boston and the American position, landed at Moreton's Point and immediately formed in order of battle, but perceiving that the Americans, undaunted by this demonstration and with spirit excited to the utmost height firmly waited the attack, they refrained from advancing till the arrival of a reinforcement from Boston.

Meanwhile the Americans were also reinforced by a body of their countrymen, commanded by the generals Warren,* Pomeroy, Putnam, and Stark; and the troops on the open ground, tearing up some adjoining post and railfence and fixing the stakes in a parallel line with a stone and railfence already standing, filled up the space between with new-mown grass and formed for themselves a cover from the musketry of the enemy. Collecting all their courage and undepressed by the advantage which their adversaries derived from the audacity of assault, they stood prepared for an effort which should yield their countrymen, if not victorious liberty, at least a memorable example of what the brave and the free can do to achieve it.

The British troops, strengthened now by the arrival of the second detachment, and formed in two lines, moved forward to the conflict, having the light infantry on the right wing, commanded by General Howe, and the grenadiers on the left, conducted by General Pigot; the former to attack the American lines in flank and the latter the redoubt in front.

The attack was begun by a heavy discharge of field

* Warren was President of the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, and had just been appointed major-general. He declined taking any command, and served in the redoubt with his musket as a volunteer.

pieces and howitzers, the troops advancing slowly and halting at short intervals to allow time for the artillery to produce effect on the works and on the spirits of their defenders. During their advance General Gage, who surveyed the field of battle from Copp's Hill, caused the battery at this place to bombard and set fire to the village of Charlestown, situated beneath the position of the Americans, whom, from the direction of the wind, he expected to annoy by the conflagration.

Charlestown, one of the earliest settlements of the Puritans in New England, a handsome and flourishing village, containing about 400 houses, built chiefly of wood, was quickly enveloped in a blaze of destruction; but a sudden change of the wind occurring at this crisis carried the smoke to a quarter which neither sheltered the approach of the British nor occasioned inconvenience to the Americans.

The conflagration added a horrid grandeur to the interesting scene that was now unfolding to the eyes of a countless multitude of spectators, who, thronging all the heights of Boston and its neighborhood, awaited, with throbbing hearts, the approaching battle.

The American troops, having permitted Howe's division to approach unmolested within a very short distance of their works, then poured in upon them such a deadly and confounding fire of smallarms that the British line was broken in an instant and fell precipitately back in headlong rout toward the landing place. This disorder was repaired by the vigorous exertions of the officers, who again brought up the repulsed troops to the attack; but the Americans, renewing their fire with a precision of aim derived from their habits of life, and unexampled perhaps in the conduct of any former battle, again spread such

carnage through the hostile ranks that the British were a second time driven back in complete confusion.

At this critical juncture General Clinton, arriving upon the field from Boston, aided the efforts of Howe and the other officers in rallying the disheartened troops, who, with some difficulty, were a third time led on to the charge. The Americans had been but scantily supplied with cartridges, partly from an overstrained attention to economy in the consumption of an article urgently needed and sparingly possessed by their countrymen, and partly in deference to the counsels of some old provincial officers, whose ideas of battle were derived from their experience in hunting, and in the system (very similar to that employment) of Indian warfare, and who insisted that, as every shot ought to kill a man, so to give the troops any more ammunition than was absolutely necessary to inflict on the enemy a loss that would be tantamount to defeat was to tempt them to neglect accuracy of aim and throw their fire away.

To the discredit of this counsel the powder of the Americans now began to fail, and consequently their fire to slacken. The British at the same time brought some of their cannons to bear upon the position of the Americans, and raked the inside of the breastwork from end to end; the fire from the ships, batteries, and field artillery was redoubled; and the redoubt, attacked on three sides at once with impetuous valor, was carried at the point of the bayonet. Yet so desperate was the resistance of its defenders that, even after their officers had commanded a retreat, they continued to fight till the redoubt was half filled with the assailants.

During these operations Pigot's division was attempting to force the left point of the breastwork, preparatory to an attack on the flank of the American line; but while his

troops advanced with signal intrepidity, they were received with unyielding firmness and determination. The Americans in this quarter, as well as at the redoubt, reserved their fire until the near approach of the enemy, and then poured in their shot with such well-directed aim as to mow down the advancing troops in whole ranks at every volley. But no sooner was the redoubt lost than the breastwork also was necessarily abandoned.

And now the Americans, beaten but unsubdued, had to perform their retreat over Charlestown Neck, which was completely raked by the guns of the Glasgow man-of-war and of two floating batteries; but, great as was the apparent danger, the retreat was accomplished with inconsiderable loss.

The British troops were too much exhausted and had suffered too severely to improve their dear-bought victory by more than a mere show of pursuit. They had brought into action 3,000 men, and their killed and wounded amounted to 1,054. The number of Americans engaged was 1,500, and their killed, wounded, and missing amounted to 453. They lost some gallant officers, of whom the most generally known and lamented was General Warren, who, having ably and successfully animated his countrymen to resist the power of Britain, now gallantly fell in the first battle that their resistance produced. And thus ended a day that showed too late to the infatuated politicians of Britain how greatly they had underrated the arduous difficulties of the contest they provoked, and how egregiously those men had deceived them who confidently predicted that the Americans would not fight. No other imagainable result of the conflict could have been more unfavorable to the prospects of Britain, whose troops, neither exhilarated by brilliant victory nor exasperated by disgraceful defeat, were depressed by a success

of which it was evident that a few more such instances would prove their ruin.

[The story of this great battle is commonly very inadequately told. The confusion of two distinct names has been tolerated mainly in consequence of ignorance of the history. And yet the confusion of Breed's Hill with Bunker Hill grew naturally out of the facts of the occasion and of the scene. To the American troops looking in the direction of the British, Bunker Hill was the height on which it was natural to pause for a position from which to fight; but on reaching it, Breed's Hill, farther on toward the British and somewhat lower down, was a bolder choice for a daring venture, and a natural point to advance to, after reaching the top of Bunker Hill. On the other hand, to the British looking in the direction of the American forces it would be natural to look forward from the lower Breed's Hill to the higher Bunker Hill; and when the Americans, having fought their main battle at Breed's Hill until, under the third British onset, their ammunition gave out and they were compelled to fall back, the desperate finish of the battle was at the base toward Breed's Hill of Bunker Hill; in fact, the works which they had thrown up were in part at the base of Bunker Hill. History however is incorrectly written in calling the battle that of Bunker Hill, and the men who fought it are given less than their due by a designation which fails to recognize the dash and daring with which, under orders to fortify and hold the top of Bunker Hill, they went down the other side of that eminence and fought to a finish one of the greatest battles of the Revolution. The battle was fought on the 17th of June, and both the scene of it and its success are referred to with historical accuracy in an important contemporary record.

In Dr. James Thacher's Military Journal, the record un-

der July, 1775, says, with italics, as follows: "I improve the interim to record an authentic narrative of the *battle on Breed's Hill*, on the 17th of June." * * * "It is said that some of the veteran British officers, who have been in some hard-fought battles in Europe, observed that they had never witnessed any one equal in severity to that on Breed's Hill." "It is stated that from Breed's Hill battle to the 25th instant the British have thrown upward of 2,000 shot and shell."

There is no question of where the front of the battle, or that end of the front nearest the British was, and Breed's Hill was undoubtedly the natural and proper designation; at the same time, the works behind which the Americans fought extended to the base of Bunker Hill, and the last severe struggle, and that in which the Americans suffered most, was at this point. None of this was on Bunker Hill however, the top of which is considerably back from its base and not a little higher; and yet a very important feature in the whole position was the highest part of Bunker Hill; this would have been fortified and held by the Americans, if their strength at the moment had been sufficient or if time could have been given to it. It is of interest moreover to note that on the day after the battle the British erected a fort on Bunker Hill to protect themselves from an apprehended renewal of the fight by the Americans. It was, in fact, on the top of Bunker Hill that the last stand of the retiring Americans was attempted to be made, Putnam, if we may trust reports to that effect, having had the work for fortification begun there, and enough done to cause him to try to stop the American retreat there.

Frothingham, in his "Siege of Boston," speaks of Bunker Hill as, at the time of the battle, "a well-known place — the name 'Bunker Hill' being found in the town

records and in deeds from an early period." In a footnote he says Breed's Hill is called "Green's Hill" in a British description of Charlestown in 1775. In alluding to the remark that has been frequently made, that Breed's Hill has been robbed of the glory that justly belongs to it, he says: "It should be remembered however that the railfence was at the base of Bunker Hill, and if not the great post of the day, here a large part of the battle was fought." In speaking of these defenses he says: "The movements of the British, along the margin of Mystic river, indicated an intention of flanking the Americans and of surrounding the redoubt. To prevent this, Colonel Prescott ordered the artillery, with two field pieces, and Captain Knowlton with the Connecticut troops, to leave the intrenchments, march down the hill, and opposite the enemy's right wing. Captain Knowlton took a position near the base of Bunker Hill, 600 feet in the rear of the redoubt, behind a fence, one-half of which was stone, with two rails of wood. He then made, a little distance in front of this, another parallel line of fence, and filled the space between them with the newly-cut grass lying in the fields." Further on he says that while the battle was in progress, "Colonel Gardner arrived on Bunker Hill, when Putnam detained a part of his regiment to labor on the works commenced there, while one company, under Capt. Josiah Harris, took part at the railfence. * * * Colonel Gardner, leading on a part of his regiment, was descending Bunker Hill when he received his death wound." In describing the retreat, Frothingham again alludes to Bunker Hill in these words: "The brow of Bunker Hill was a place of great slaughter. General Putnam here rode to the rear of the retreating troops, and, regardless of the balls flying about him, with his sword drawn and still undaunted in his bearing, urged them to renew the fight in the unfinished works. 'Make

a stand here!' he exclaimed; 'we can stop them yet!' 'In God's name form, and give them one shot more!' It was here that he stood by an artillery piece until the enemy's bayonets were almost upon him. The veteran Pomeroy too, with his shattered musket in his hand, and his face to the foe, endeavored to rally the men. It was not possible however to check the retreat."

That the glory that now attaches to Breed's Hill was intended for Bunker Hill by the committee of safety is a well-authenticated fact. The order given to Colonel Prescott by General Ward was to proceed to Bunker Hill, build fortifications to be planned by Col. Richard Gridley, the chief engineer, and defend them until he should be relieved. When the body of troops, provided with intrenching tools, reached the summit of Bunker Hill, a consultation was held and it was decided that a position nearer Boston — Breed's Hill — "seemed better adapted to the objects of the expedition, and better suited the daring spirit of the officers. It was contended however that works ought not to be commenced at this place until Bunker Hill had been fortified, in order to cover, in case of necessity, a retreat. * * * On the pressing importunity of one of the generals it was concluded to proceed to Breed's Hill. At the same time it was determined that works should be erected on Bunker Hill." And this, as appears above, was accordingly done.

The testimony in support of the claim that the British also fortified Bunker Hill is equally strong and convincing. Drake, in his "Old Landmarks of Middlesex," says that the British erected a very strong fortress "on Bunker Hill."

J. Finch, F. B. S., in an article published in Silliman's "Journal," in 1822, "On the Forts Around Boston, Which Were Erected During the War of Independence," in which

he makes a most earnest plea for the preservation of these historic spots, says of Bunker Hill: "The remains of the British fort are visible; the works must have been very strong and occupied a large extent of ground; they are on the summit and slope of the hill looking toward the peninsula." His description of the appearance of Breed's Hill at that time shows it to have been in no better state of preservation than Bunker Hill. He says: "The redoubt thrown up by the Americans is nearly effaced; scarcely the slightest trace of it remains." All of which tends to show that after nearly half a century the fortifications on Bunker Hill [the British however, not the American, which were never more than incomplete] were as well known as those on Breed's Hill. In confirmation of the statement that the British fortified Bunker Hill is the statement of Frothingham in speaking of the apprehension entertained by the British after battle, that the contest might be renewed. He says: "The British, reinforced by additional troops from Boston, threw up, during the night a line of breastworks on the northern side of Bunker Hill."

An old resident of Charlestown, who for many years has made a study of the historic landmarks of that district, says that Bunker Hill has always been known as the old fort, and in an article contributed to the Charlestown "Enterprise," in 1882, advocating the taking the hill for a park, he says: "The little park thus formed would be the proper site for the statue of General Stark, which the New Hampshire men now propose to add to the Bunker Hill collection, being exactly the place where his regiment was posted while defending so stubbornly the left of the line of battle, which all know never gave way until the redoubt at the other end was carried and occupied by the British." Continuing, he says: "After all the mutilation

that Bunker Hill has suffered there still remains an opportunity to make on its summit one of the most charming places of summer resort possessed by any city in the world, * * * where still may be traced one of the bastions of the old fort — they called it a castle — built by the British to command the Neck, after they obtained possession of the town."

The authorities quoted confirm the accuracy of the traditions of the people of Charlestown, and the recollection of the old inhabitants not only in regard to the existence of the fortifications, but as to their exact location.

It should be noted here that this great battle was fought by the pick of the militia assembled under the nominal command of Gen. Artemas Ward, who was himself at the moment under an appointment requiring him to carry out the orders of what was known as the Committee of Safety, orders given out through another body known as the Council of War. He was really in command of Massachusetts troops only, together with the New Hampshire regiments; and the considerable number of Connecticut troops at Roxbury, under Spencer, and at Cambridge, under Putnam, might have acted independently had not the field of operations been that of Massachusetts soil. About the middle of May joint action by the Committee of Safety and the Council of War declared for the establishment of a strong redoubt on Bunker Hill, near the northeastern termination of the peninsula of Charlestown, at a point 110 feet above the water of Boston harbor. From this summit the hill fell away by a gradual slope for about 700 yards, and then rose to an elevation of about seventy-five feet just north by east of what was then Charlestown. It was this second elevation which bore the name of Breed's Hill. It was learned in the American camp that the British commander in Boston, General Gage, proposed to

carry into execution, on the 18th of June, a plan for taking possession of Bunker Hill. This the Americans anticipated by orders, on June 15th, for occupying and fortifying the same position, and William Prescott, Colonel of a Middlesex regiment, was put in charge of the enterprise, and a brigade of 1,000 men placed under his command a night and a day only in advance of the purpose of Gage. The command was composed of 300 of Prescott's own regiment, detachments from the regiments of Frye and Bridge, and 200 Connecticut men under Knowlton. Richard Gridley, an experienced engineer, was with Prescott. Setting out from Cambridge Common as soon as darkness favored, and after a fervent prayer by President Langdon, of Harvard College, who was serving as a chaplain, the march led across the causeway built on a low isthmus separating the Mystic and Charles rivers, and communicating from the mainland to the Charlestown peninsula, with Bunker Hill a short distance beyond the causeway. Whatever the orders really were, Prescott and his men chose to understand them as justifying going over Bunker Hill to Breed's Hill, as a more favorable position for threatening both Boston and the shipping in the harbor. It was not until midnight that pickaxe and spade were set to work to prepare a redoubt about eight rods square, but before daylight the work was completed. With the dawn of day the guns of the British shipping near at hand and a battery of British heavy guns mounted on Copp's Hill, only 1,200 yards away, rained shot and shell upon the freshly thrown-up fortress of earth; and such was the severity of the cannonade as to prevent what Prescott attempted — an extension of his line from the east side of the redoubt northerly to the bottom of the hill. About twenty rods this had been executed, giving a breastwork outside of the redoubt, when the "intolerable fire" of the

great guns caused its suspension. It was a severe trial to raw soldiers to thus face the fire of artillery. Prescott, walking leisurely backward and forward on the top of the earthwork, and one of his captains imitating his example, gave a stimulus to the courage of the Americans, and advertised to the British the fearless character of the venture, which Gage with a telescope watched, while a Tory brother-in-law of Prescott stood at his side. "Will he fight?" said Gage. "To the last drop of his blood," was the reply. By 9 o'clock in the morning it was evident to the British generals that the delay incident to attempting to go round to the rear of the Americans would give them a great advantage, and that the attack must be made immediately on the side that could be soonest reached. It was one of those days of extreme heat which sometimes come in advance of the American summer, and Prescott's men were by noon on the verge of exhaustion, save for the indomitable spirit and zeal for action of the commander and the great body of those under him. Messengers repeatedly sent off to report progress and ask for reinforcements and provisions had not at noon brought any relief. The night march and the twelve hours' labor, the larger part of it under the heat of a blazing sun and amid a storm of shot and shells, had been endured with only the refreshment meagerly supplied from their knapsacks, and with not even a cup of cold water to stay their thirst; while hardly less serious was the failure of headquarters to add anything to their very scant supply of powder. The work however in the trenches was done, and the tools piled up in the rear, when Putnam, whom Prescott's second messenger had met hastening from Cambridge to Charleston, rode up to the Breed's Hill redoubt and asked to have the intrenching tools sent back to Bunker Hill for further preparations

there against the British impending effort to get possession of the peninsula. The sending back of the intrenching tools took away a considerable number of Prescott's men, leaving him about 700 or 800, worn with prolonged toil, weakened by hunger, and yet resolute to meet the expected British attack from the force of about 5,000 effective troops which the British commander had in Boston, together with the British shipping and floating batteries, the guns of which raked the isthmus by which Charlestown was reached from the American camp, and over which reinforcements must come.

Apparently nothing could exceed the danger of Prescott's position. Ward gave no sign of sending either food or powder or men; of powder especially his supply was very limited, and he doubted of burning it just then; nor was he disposed to weaken his own strength at Cambridge, fearing that the real battle would be an attack on his position; the most that he would do was to order the New Hampshire regiments of Stark to march from Medford, and with Reed near the Charlestown isthmus, go to Prescott's support. Stubbornly inactive all day, not even leaving his house, and even refusing to believe it when word was brought that the British were actually landing to give battle against Prescott, the general in command presented an unhappy contrast to Prescott and Putnam and the work to which they had with so much heart and courage put their hands.

To meet the landing of the British on a point east by north from the redoubt on Breed's Hill, Prescott ordered his artillery, with two field pieces and the stanch Connecticut men under Knowlton, to take position in that direction. About 200 yards in the rear of his unfinished breastwork, east of the redoubt, a low stone wall, over which were two rails of post and fence rail, extended back for

300 yards or more, while an opportune ditch helped to make the line convenient for defense. An abundance of freshly-cut grass was at hand also, and with some further extemporizing of a parallel post and railfence and bringing all the grass into the line between the two, something like a fighting line was extemporized; and here came such individual reinforcements as the ringing bells and drums beating to arms in Cambridge had sent off without much reference to orders from the timid and hesitating headquarters. Here came venerable Seth Pomeroy of Northhampton, riding a borrowed horse to Charlestown Neck, and thence proceeding on foot, his fowling piece on his shoulder, to take, amid loud cheers, his place at the fence and winrow line. Here came also Joseph Warren, three days before elected a provincial major-general, entreated by Elbridge Gerry not to thus put his life in peril; fully aware of the conditions at headquarters and the dangers to be met at Prescott's redoubt; but, more than all, alive to the possibility of significance beyond expression or estimate in fighting on that day or even dying for one's country in the initial battle for liberty then and there to be fought; it was about 2 o'clock as, with a musket in his hand, the task only of a private soldier in view, he crossed over the top of Bunker Hill alone, stopped for a short time at the railfence and winrow defense to talk with Putnam, and passed on thence to Prescott's redoubt; declining, both with Putnam and Prescott, to take any other position than that of a man with a gun, and choosing in the line a place of danger and importance.

Some fragments of Ward's army, or of the troops willing to take his orders, reached the positions of either Prescott or Putnam before the fight was on; detachments of 125 Essex men; 70 Worcester and Middlesex men, under Lieutenant-Colonel Buckminster; above 50 more from the

same counties under John Nixon; about 40 Worcester county men, under Willard Moore, and about 50 privates from a Lancaster regiment, with no higher officers than captains. Six light field pieces brought upon the ground were of little use from want of ammunition. These reached Prescott before the battle. After the British had landed, and just before they advanced to the attack, Col. John Stark, with New Hampshire levies next in number to the men of Prescott's own regiment, reached Putnam's position and took a hand in completing the fence and grass breastworks and in fighting with Knowlton's Connecticut men on Prescott's flank while Prescott himself fought at the redoubt.

Howe brought into action the chief strength of the British army, after having distributed refreshments to them in great abundance, and with every effort to send them to their task prepared for energetic action and speedy success. About 2,000 men had been started when reinforcements were hurried after them, and probably from 2,500 to 3,000 experienced and disciplined soldiers were launched at the embattled farmers behind Prescott's earthwork and the line of stone wall, railfence, and grass, behind which Stark and Knowlton and Reed mustered their commands. By the time that the news of the concentration of the British forces upon the impending battle reached Ward at Cambridge his fear for his own position gave way, and under pressure he ordered reinforcements and supplies, which might, if they had been sent soon enough, have enabled the Americans to drive the British in overwhelming defeat back upon their boats; but Ward's orders came too late. The whole number of Americans in the battle, including all who reached the peninsula in season for the fight at anv part of the American line, did not exceed 1,500 men.

Lord Howe, the British commander, undertook to make the burning of Charlestown promote the success of his advance upon the American works just outside of the town. Gage had threatened, directly after the expedition to Concord, that Charlestown should be burned if American occupation of the heights contiguous to it should be attempted. Howe now sent to Clinton and Burgoyne a request to put the threat in execution; and with a prompt discharge of shells from Copp's Hill, and a party of men landing to promote a conflagration, the prompt destruction of the town was made sure; and at about half-past 2 the British advance was made in two columns, one against the redoubt, and the other, led by Howe himself, against the flank, where Howe calculated upon easily surmounting the railfence and grass defense to get upon the rear of Prescott and force him to a surrender. With Charlestown's 500 edifices of wood going down in a tempest of fire; with the battery on Copp's Hill, the two floating batteries, and the shipping in the harbor maintaining an incessant fire upon the American position, Howe's columns, with the splendid bravery of perfect discipline, regular uniforms, and burnished weapons, struggled gallantly through the tall grass and across the walls and fences of the hillside fields to the near vicinity of the American works. With some pauses to permit the artillery to operate in advance, and firing with their muskets as they went forward, the show they made was far more impressive than any effect of the shooting, which did but little injury because it was too soon and too high. Prescott is said to have told his men, as he went the rounds at the final moment of preparation to receive the British assault: "The Redcoats will never reach the redoubt if you will but withhold your fire till I give the order, and be careful not to shoot over their heads." A participant in the bat-

tle, who was probably one of Reed's command, behind the railfence and grass work with the commands of Stark and Knowlton, is known to the present writer to have told the story of Bunker Hill with the statement that their orders were not to fire until they could see the whites of the eyes of the advancing enemy and then to aim at the waist of their breeches. However given, this particular of the American action undoubtedly contributed to make their fighting phenomenally effective. Prescott waited until, as he was himself disposed to estimate, the enemy were within eight rods of the muskets of his steady marksmen, and upon giving the word "Fire," the discharge of every gun along the whole front of both redoubt and breastwork cut down as with a scythe nearly every man in the front rank of the British advance, and for the minute which followed before precipitate retreat swept the British back to the foot of the hill and even to their boats, the American marksmen, loading their muskets behind their cover and firing at discretion with perfect marksmanship, made the slaughter exceedingly difficult for any force to stand up against.

At the other position in the American line, where Howe proposed to himself to brush the American farmers and their grass work out of his way, and pass round to the rear of Prescott, the British advance was confidently and gallantly made, Howe's troops moving into line with the precision of a mere parade when within about eighty or one hundred yards of the American defenses. Here Putnam, in the terms most likely — for they sound like him — of the report already mentioned, made his men reserve their fire, and without a single instance of disobedience of the order, when the proper moment came, resting their guns on the rails of the fence, the deliberate, accurately aimed, and universally effective discharge cut the British

down so rapidly, and so soon threw the force into complete confusion as to leave no choice but of retreat out of reach of the remorseless, deadly fire.

There was no question then behind those American defenses but of victory, if only headquarters had, with answerable confidence and courage, soon enough sent on supplies of ammunition and reasonably available reinforcements. In the British ranks confidence and discipline were shattered, and only with difficulty were the officers able to rally their men for a renewal of the attack. Within about a quarter of an hour however the column which had attempted the assault upon Prescott's redoubt were brought up again in the same order as before, and again the American fire was withheld until the enemy were within five or six rods of the redoubt, and then given with a precision which seemed even more fatal than that by which the earlier attack was made of none effect. Even while the British pressed forward with extreme spirit, the British officers especially exposing themselves fearlessly, the continuous stream of fire from the whole American line blazed so relentlessly, and cut down all before it so thoroughly, that hardly were a few moments of brave endurance passed before again the confident assailants gave way in greater disorder than before, leaving their dead and wounded covering the ground almost up to the front of the redoubt.

Meanwhile the situation of Howe's column, brought up to a second attack upon the railfence and grass-works line, was still worse. Flimsy as the line was to the eye of a British general, there was nothing flimsy about the line of fire poured out by the steady marksmen behind it. It was but a few moments before the British dead lay spread in front of it as but a day before the grass had lain under the scythe of the mower. It was a line which even

SERGEANT MOLLY AT THE BATTLE OF MONMOUTH.

upon the second assault could not be penetrated. Survivors of the attempt themselves said: "How could we penetrate it? Most of our grenadiers and light infantry, the moment of presenting themselves, lost three-fourths, and many nine-tenths, of their men. Some had only eight or nine men in a company left, some only five, four, or three." Howe himself, for a few seconds, stood alone among the officers and men killed or wounded around him. And to add to the startlingly impressive features of the scene, the flames of burning Charlestown, and the participation in the battle of the artillery, gave a background to this scene of unexpected slaughter which caused Burgoyne to write: "The whole was a complication of horror and importance beyond anything it ever came to my lot to be witness to. It was a sight for a young soldier that the longest service may not furnish again."

Practically however the fight was now over, because the Americans lacked ammunition with which to continue it. Neither Prescott's confidence nor the courage of his men wavered in the least, but during the longer interval that preceded the third attack a council of officers discovered that there was very little powder left. Prescott had sent in the morning for a supply, but had received none. A few artillery cartridges were discovered and the powder in them distributed for use in the muskets. The alternative of the bayonet was out of the question, as there were not fifty bayonets available. The British meanwhile not less stunned than enraged at the sight of such a field of their dead and wounded prepared themselves for a last supreme effort; cannon were brought to bear in such a manner as to rake the inside of the breastworks from one end of it to the other, compelling the American marksmen to crowd within their earthwork, against which Howe now

concentrated his forces, except the light infantry and part of the grenadiers left to repeat the attack on the railfence.

For the third advance, knapsacks were laid aside and fixed bayonets brought into use. Clinton, moreover, who had until now watched the battle from Copp's Hill, undertook, without orders, to come up with two battalions on the extreme left of the British advance. Prescott's force within the redoubt thus assailed numbered less than 700 men, some of whom had only one round of ammunition left, and none more than four rounds. When therefore, after a single deadly volley from the Americans, which caused the British to waver while yet they sprang forward without returning the fire, the path was clear for their bayonets; the American fire not only slackened, but began to die away, and with neither powder nor bayonets, nothing more being possible, Prescott, at a little before 4, his redoubt already half filled with British regulars, and he himself on the point of being surrounded, gave the word to retreat. Among the last to leave the fort, his coat and waistcoat rent and pierced by British bayonets, the fatal thrust of which he had parried with his sword, he escaped unhurt. Had the British been less exhausted the close of the battle might have been much more disastrous to the Americans. As it was, the defenders of the redoubt under Prescott would have been cut off had not the American force at the railfence held in check the third attack there until the main body had left Breed's Hill on their retreat, which was made with a regularity not to be expected of troops many of whom had never seen an engagement. The Connecticut companies under Knowlton and the New Hampshire soldiers under Stark were the last to give way before the British bayonets. At the redoubt; on the brow of Bunker Hill where Putnam exerted himself to have the retreating patriots make a stand: and on

the isthmus leading from the peninsula out toward the American camp, and a point specially exposed to a raking fire from the British, were the three points where American blood was spilled. Beyond the isthmus the British were unable to pursue adversaries to whose courage the heavy roll of their own dead or wounded, more than a third of those engaged (1,054), bore witness. The American killed and missing were 145, and the wounded 304. Had Ward been out of Putnam's way, had he fairly stood by Prescott, it would have been not merely a virtual victory, but one of the greatest in history.]

CHAPTER III.

WASHINGTON TAKES COMMAND OF THE ARMY.

1775.

EVERY necessary arrangement with Congress having been completed, Washington departed from Philadelphia, June 21, 1775, to join the army before Boston. The journey was performed on horseback, and he was escorted as far as Kingsbridge, at the northern extremity of New York island, by a volunteer company of light cavalry, composed of gentlemen, styled the First Troop.* The companions of his journey were General Lee and General Schuyler.

General Lee was an original genius, possessing the most brilliant talents, great military powers, and extensive intelligence and knowledge of the world; but he was eccentric and even cynical in his habits. He had seen considerable active service in Europe; had quarrelled with the British ministry. He took a lively interest in the dispute between this country and Great Britain, being, of course, on the side of the colonists. Coming over to this country in November, 1773, he had traveled rapidly through the Colonies, animating the people, both by conversation and

* This company of volunteers, one of the most respectable in Philadelphia, still retains its organization and performs regular duty. It appears to hold the same position there as the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company does in Boston. When forming Washington's escort from Philadelphia to New York, the First Troop was commanded by Captain Markoe.

his eloquent pen, to a determined and persevering resistance to British tyranny.

His enthusiasm in favor of the rights of the Colonies was such that, after the battle of Lexington, he accepted, as we have seen, a major-general's commission in the American army, though his ambition had been thought to aim at the post of Commander-in-Chief. Previous to this however, he resigned the commission which he had till then retained in the British service, and relinquished his half pay. This he did in a letter to the British secretary at war, in which he expressed his disapprobation of the oppressive measures of Parliament, declaring them to be so actually subversive of the rights and liberties of every individual subject, so destructive to the whole empire at large, and ultimately so ruinous to His Majesty's own person, dignity, and family that he thought himself obliged in conscience, as a citizen, an Englishman, and soldier of a free estate, to exert his utmost to defeat them.

Lee's devotion to the cause of freedom was apparently sincere, but his rashness and violent temper were destined to darken the close of his career.

Washington's other companion on the journey was a more genial and amiable as well as a far more exalted character.

General Schuyler was a native of New York, a member of one of the most respectable families in that State, and highly merits the character of an intelligent and meritorious officer. As a private gentleman, he was dignified but courteous, his manners urbane, and his hospitality unbounded. He was justly considered as one of the most distinguished champions of liberty, and his noble mind soared above despair, even at a period when he experienced injustice from the public, and when darkness and gloom overspread the land. He was able, prompt, and

decisive, and his conduct, in every branch of duty, marked his active industry and rapid execution.

With such companions as these two officers, who, as well as Washington, had both served in the old French War, the journey of Washington must have been enlivened by conversation of the most interesting and agreeable kind.

Before they had proceeded many miles from Philadelphia, they were met by a messenger from the army before Boston bearing dispatches to Congress, containing the news of the battle of Bunker Hill. To Washington's eager inquiry, how the militia had behaved in the battle, he of course received the most satisfactory answer; he exclaimed on hearing it: "The liberties of the country are safe!" The moral effect of that battle was not confined to his estimate of its importance. It was felt through the whole country during the war.

As the cavalcade passed through the towns of New Jersey, great demonstrations of respect and enthusiastic greetings everywhere met the new Commander-in-Chief. His fine martial figure, and the grave and commanding presence which distinguished him through life, inspired at once a high degree of awe and of confidence; while the splendid appearance of the First Troop, and the attendance of the famous and popular generals who accompanied him, rendered the spectacle still more attractive and imposing.

[Washington's commission was signed on the 19th of June, 1775, and on the following day a demonstration of local patriotism was made under the eye of the new Commander-in-Chief, by a march out to the commons, and organization in brigade of "the three battalions of Philadelphia and the Liberties, together with the artillery company, a troop of light horse, several companies of light

infantry, rangers, and riflemen, in all about 2,000." This was the first Continental demonstration under the eye of Washington as Continental Commander. The departure for New York, then very largely loyal to British views of "the rebellion," was in some sense a venture into the enemy's country, although favorers of the popular cause were in sufficient numbers for a demonstration of welcome to the popular chief. Washington set off for his great work on Friday, June 23d, "accompanied a few miles from town by the troop of light horse, and by all the officers of the city militia on horseback," and these, on parting with him, expressed "the most ardent wishes for his success over the enemies of our liberty and country."* General Schuyler wrote to the New York Provincial or Colony Congress from New Brunswick, on Saturday, June 24, 1775:

"General Washington, with his retinue, is now here, and proposes to be at Newark by 9 tomorrow morning. The situation of the men of war [British] at New York (we are informed) is such as may make it necessary that some precaution should be taken in crossing Hudson's river, and he would take it as a favor if some gentlemen of your body would meet him tomorrow at Newark, as the advice you may there give him will determine whether he will continue his proposed route or not."

The body thus appealed to had on the 23d taken order to have Colonel Lasher, said to have been a German shoemaker, "send one of his field-officers to meet General Washington, and to know when he will be in this city," and "to make such orders as to have his battalion ready to receive General Washington when he shall arrive."

* Rivington's Gazetteer, June 29, 1775, quoted by Ford, Vol. II, p. 494.

In response to General Schuyler's letter the New York Congress deputed Thomas Smith, John Sloss Hobart, Gouverneur Morris, and Richard Montgomery, "to go immediately to Newark, and recommend to General Washington the place which they shall think most prudent for him to cross at." Not only were very many of the New York people ardently British in their prejudices and purposes, and the Provincial Congress, representing the popular cause, engaged in considering how to compromise with Great Britain, but for the very day of the coming of the foremost "rebel" leader, the arrival by ship from England of Tryon, the royal governor, was expected; he had in fact arrived at the mouth of the harbor and might land at 1 o'clock. The redoubtable Lasher, with his battalion, was ordered to be as numerous as possible with divers companies of militia at divers points and distribute his military manners to either of the eminent comers as circumstances might require. The event was a reception to Washington early enough to allow of attention to Tryon after the "rebels" had carried out their programme. It was on Sunday, June 25th, and in the first half of the afternoon, when the morning services in the churches were over. One account, given by Gilbert Livingston in a report to Dr. Peter Tappan, was as follows:

"Last Sunday about 2 o'clock, the Generals Washington, Lee, and Schuyler arrived here. They crossed the North river at Hoboken and landed at Colonel Lispenard's. There were eight or ten companies under arms, all in uniforms, who marched out to Lispenard's. The procession began from there thus — the companies first, the [New York Provincial] Congress next, two of the Continental Congress, general officers next, and a company of horse from Philadelphia, who came with the gen-

eral, brought up the rear. There were an innumerable company of people, men, women, and children present." Another account said that it was with "a greater number of the principal inhabitants of this city than ever appeared here on any occasion before." A staunch Royalist, Judge Thomas Jones, made this record:

"After 12 o'clock the same day Washington, Lee, and Schuyler, three of the first rebel generals appointed by Congress to the command of their army, the two first on their way to Boston, the latter for Albany, to command the expedition preparing against Canada, arrived from Philadelphia, and were entertained at the house of Leonard Lispenard, Esq., about two miles out of town. Upon this occasion the volunteer companies raised for the express purpose of rebellion, the members of the Provincial Congress, those of the city committee, the parsons of the dissenting meeting-houses, with all the leaders and partisans of faction and rebellion (including Peter R. Livingston, Esq., and Thomas Smith, John Smith, and Joshua Hett Smith, the brother-in-law and brothers of William Smith, Esq.,) waited upon the beach to receive them upon their landing from the Jersey shore, and conducted them up to Lispenard's, amidst the repeated shouts and huzzas of the seditious and rebellious multitude, where they dined, and toward evening were escorted to town, attended and conducted in the same tumultuous and ridiculous manner."

Washington wrote to the Congress at Philadelphia, after reaching New York:

"Gentlemen: The rain on Friday afternoon and Saturday; the advice of several gentlemen of the Jerseys and this city, by no means to cross Hudson's river at the lower ferry; and some other occurrences too trivial to mention (which happened on the road), prevented my

arrival at this place until the afternoon of this day. In the morning, after giving General Schuyler such orders, as, from the result of my inquiry into matters here, appear necessary, I shall set out on my journey to the camp at Boston and shall proceed with all the dispatch in my power. Powder is so essential an article that I cannot help again repeating the necessity of a supply. The camp at Boston from the best accounts I can get from thence, is but very poorly supplied. At this place they have scarce any. How they are provided in General Wooster's camp I have not been able yet to learn.

"Governor Tryon is arrived and General Schuyler directed to advise you of the line of conduct he moves in. I fear it will not be very favorable to the American cause."

General Wooster's command consisted of Connecticut troops posted on the southern border of that Colony to protect its water front on Long Island Sound. Ten days before Washington arrived in New York, the Provincial Congress of New York, in view of a report that the landing of a British regiment from Ireland was imminent, asked General Wooster to come within five miles of the city for its defense, and to come for that purpose under the direction of the Continental Congress, or that of New York. With the approval of the Connecticut authorities, General Wooster fixed himself in camp near New York, having marched for that purpose June 28th. New York had occasion to acknowledge this action by saying: "We beg leave to testify to you our high sense of the readiness which you show to assist our Colony. That honest zeal, which inspirits our countrymen in Connecticut, commands our admiration and praise."

At 5 P. M. of Sunday, June 25th, Washington further wrote to the Continental Congress:

"Upon my arrival here this afternoon I was informed

that an express was in town from the provincial camp in Massachusetts Bay, and having seen among other papers in his possession a letter directed to you as president of Congress I have taken the liberty to open it.

"You will find, Sir, by that letter, a great want of powder in the provincial army; which I sincerely hope the Congress will supply as speedily and as effectually as is in their power. One thousand pounds in weight were sent to the camp at Cambridge three days ago from this city; which has left this place almost destitute of this necessary article; there being at this time from the best information not more than four barrels of powder in the city of New York."

On Monday, the 26th of June, the New York Congress approved the draught of an address to General Washington, and at 2:30 that afternoon it was presented to him. Its terms were these:

"At a time when the most loyal of his Majesty's subjects, from a regard to the laws and constitution by which he sits on the throne, feel themselves reduced to the unhappy necessity of taking up arms to defend their dearest rights and privileges, while we deplore the calamities of this divided Empire, we rejoice in the appointment of a gentleman from whose abilities and virtue we are taught to expect both security and peace.

"Confiding in you, Sir, and in the worthy generals immediately under your command, we have the most flattering hopes of success in the glorious struggle for American liberty, and the fullest assurances that whenever this important contest shall be decided by that fondest wish of every American soul, an accommodation with our mother country, you will cheerfully resign the important deposit

committed into your hands, and resume the character of our worthiest citizen."

In reply Washington said:

"At the same time that with you I deplore the unhappy necessity of such an appointment as that with which I am now honored, I cannot but feel sentiments of the highest gratitude for this affecting instance of distinction and regard.

"May your warmest wishes be realized in the success of America, at this important and interesting period; and be assured that every exertion of my worthy colleagues and myself will be extended to the re-establishment of peace and harmony between the mother country and these Colonies. As to the fatal but necessary operations of war, when we assumed the soldier we did not lay aside the citizen, and we shall most sincerely rejoice with you in that happy hour, when the re-establishment of American liberty, on the most firm and solid foundations, shall enable us to return to our private stations, in the bosom of a free, peaceful, and happy country."]

Washington had already decided that General Schuyler was to remain in New York, to direct the military operations in that quarter. His knowledge of the Colony, his extensive influence among its inhabitants, his high position and well-known character for military skill and experience, peculiarly fitted General Schuyler for taking the command at this important post. The presence of Governor Tryon, who arrived at this juncture, and the great number of adherents to the royal cause who were residing in various parts of the Colony, and were watching for an opportunity to embarrass the operations of Congress and of the patriotic party, rendered General Schuyler's task

one of great difficulty, requiring sound judgment and policy as well as military skill.

[To Major-General Philip Schuyler Washington gave the following directions, June 25, 1775:

"You are to take upon you the command of all the troops destined for the New York department, and see that the orders of the Continental Congress are carried into execution, with as much precision and exactness as possible. For your better government therein, you are herewith furnished with a copy of the instructions given me by that honorable body. Such parts thereof as are within the line of your duty, you will please to pay particular attention to. Delay no time in occupying the several posts recommended by the Provincial Congress of this Colony, and puting them in a fit posture to answer the end designed; neither delay any time in securing the stores, which are, or ought to have been, removed from this city by order of the Continental Congress.

"Keep a watchful eye upon Governor Tryon, and, if you find him attempting, directly or indirectly, any measures inimical to the common cause, use every means in your power to frustrate his designs. It is not in my power, at this time, to point out the mode by which this end is to be accomplished; but if forcible measures are judged necessary, I should have no difficulty in ordering them, if the Continental Congress was not sitting; but as this is the case, and the seizing of governors quite a new thing, and of exceeding great importance, I must refer you to that body for direction if the Governor should make any move toward increasing the strength of the Tory party, or in arming them against the cause we are embarked in.

"In like manner watch the movements of the Indian Agent, Colonel Guy Johnson, and prevent, as far as you

can, the effect of his influence to our prejudice with the Indians. Obtain the best information you can of the temper and disposition of those people, and also of the Canadians, that a proper line may be marked out to conciliate their good opinion, or facilitate any future operation.

"The posts on Lake Champlain, &c., you will please to have properly supplied with provisions and ammunition; and this I am persuaded you will aim at doing on the best terms, to prevent our good cause from sinking under a heavy load of expense."

The Governor for British control of New York, Tryon, had held the position since August, 1771, and was on the return from a visit of some months to England, when he thus came under scrutiny by Washington and Schuyler, because, with great talent for mischief, he was bitterly hostile to the patriots represented by Washington.

Johnson was a nabob of wealth and large influence with the Indians, at his seat in the valley of the Mohawk river on what was then the frontier of New York.]

After giving General Schuyler his instructions, Washington, still accompanied by General Lee, and escorted by successive companies of volunteers, pursued his journey through Connecticut till he arrived at Springfield, Mass., 100 miles from Boston. Here he was met by a committee from the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, who had been directed to provide escorts, and to attend him in person during the remainder of the route.

On the 2d of July, 1775, he arrived at Watertown, where the Congress of Massachusetts was then sitting. He was received with great cordiality and respect, and greeted with a congratulatory address, in which occurred this statement:

"We would not presume to prescribe to your Excellency, but supposing you would choose to be informed of

the general character of the soldiers who compose the army, we beg leave to represent, that the greatest part of them have not before seen service; and although naturally brave and of good understanding, yet, for want of experience in military life, have but little knowledge of divers things most essential to the preservation of health and even life. The youth of the army are not possessed of the absolute necessity of cleanliness in their dress and lodging, continual exercise, and strict temperance, to preserve them from diseases frequently prevailing in camps, especially among those who from childhood, have been used to a laborious life."

To this address Washington made the following reply:

"Gentlemen, your kind congratulations on my appointment and arrival demand my warmest acknowledgments, and will ever be retained in grateful remembrance. In exchanging the enjoyments of domestic life for the duties of my present honorable but arduous station, I only emulate the virtue and public spirit of the whole province of Massachusetts, which, with a firmness and patriotism without example, has sacrificed all the comforts of social and political life, in support of the rights of mankind and the welfare of our common country. My highest ambition is to be the happy instrument of vindicating these rights, and to see this devoted province again restored to peace, liberty, and safety.

"The short space of time, which has elapsed since my arrival, does not permit me to decide upon the state of the army. The course of human affairs forbids an expectation that troops formed under such circumstances should at once possess the order, regularity, and discipline of veterans. Whatever deficiences there may be will, I doubt not, soon be made up by the activity and zeal of the officers, and the docility and obedience of the men.

These qualities, united with their native bravery and spirit, will afford a happy presage of success, and put a final period to those distresses which now overwhelm this once happy country.

"I most sincerely thank you for your declaration of readiness at all times to assist me in the discharge of the duties of my station. They are so complicated and extended that I shall need the assistance of every good man and lover of his country. I therefore repose the utmost confidence in your aid.

"In return for your affectionate wishes to myself, permit me to say that I earnestly implore that Divine Being in whose hands are all human events, to make you and your constituents as distinguished in private and public happiness as you have been by ministerial oppression and private and public distress."]

When the ceremony of this public reception was concluded, Washington, escorted by a company of light horse and an immense cavalcade of citizens, proceeded to the camp at Cambridge. We may imagine the enthusiasm with which he was received — the huzzas of the multitude, the roar of cannon, the *feu de joie* of musketry, echoed back by the surrounding hills, while all were eagerly endeavoring to gain a view of that noble form, and calm, dignified countenance, which formed the principal attraction of that interesting and exciting scene.*

* The following description of Washington's appearance is from Thacher's Military Journal, July 20, 1775:

"I have been much gratified this day with a view of General Washington. His Excellency was on horseback, in company with several military gentlemen. It was not difficult to distinguish him from all others; his personal appearance is truly noble and majestic, being tall and well proportioned. His dress is a blue coat with buff-colored facings; a rich epaulette on each shoulder; buff under-dress, and an elegant small sword; a black cockade in his hat."

It was on the 2d of July, 1775, that Washington arrived at Cambridge, and occupied the headquarters which had been provided for him at the Craigie Mansion.* It was not till the next day that he formally took command of the army.

The Rev. William Emerson has furnished a graphic description of the camp after the arrival of Washington. "There is great overturning in the camp, as to order and regularity. New lords, new laws. The Generals, Washington and Lee, are upon the lines every day. New orders from His Excellency are read to the respective regiments every morning after prayers. The strictest government is taking place, and great distinction is made between the officers and soldiers. Every one is made to know his place, and to keep it, or be tied up and receive thirty or forty lashes, according to his crime. Thousands are at work every day from 4 till 11 o'clock in the morning. It is surprising how much work has been done. The lines are extended almost from Cambridge to Mystic river, so that very soon it will be morally impossible for the enemy to get between the works, except in one place, which is supposed to be left purposely unfortified, to entice the enemy out of their fortresses. Who would have thought, twelve months past, that all Cambridge and Charlestown would be covered over with American camps, and cut up into forts and intrenchments, and all the lands, fields, orchards laid common — horses and cattle feeding in the choicest mowing-land, whole fields of corn eaten down to the ground, and large parks of well-regulated locusts cut down for firewood and other public uses?

* The house is still standing in perfect preservation, and celebrated as having become the residence of the American poet, Longfellow.

"This, I must say, looks a little melancholy. My quarters are at the foot of the famous Prospect Hill, where such great preparations are made for the reception of the enemy. It is very diverting to walk among the camps. They are as different in their form as the owners are in their dress; and every tent is a portraiture of the temper and taste of the persons who encamp in it. Some are made of boards, and some of sail-cloth. Some partly of one and partly of the other. Again, others are made of stone and turf, brick or brush. Some are thrown up in a hurry; others are cautiously wrought with doors and windows, done with wreaths and withes, in the manner of a basket. Some are your proper tents and marquees, looking like the regular camp of the enemy. In these are the Rhode Islanders, who are furnished with tent equipage, and everything in the most exact English style. However, I think this great variety is rather a beauty than a blemish in the army."

Early in July (1775), a correspondence between Generals Lee and Burgoyne attracted much attention. General Lee had served with General Burgoyne in Portugal, and an intimate friendship had long existed between them. On the arrival of the latter in Boston, General Lee, then in Philadelphia, wrote to his friend a letter full of invectives against the British ministry, and containing an elaborate statement of his views of the merits of the contest. Though written with a warmth approaching to violence, General Burgoyne replied to it courteously, and proposed an interview with General Lee at Brown's House, on Boston Neck. This was sent out (July 8th) by a trumpeter. The letter and the expediency of the proposed interview were laid before the Provincial Congress. Though Congress, to prevent jealousy, appointed Elbridge Gerry to attend General Lee, they suggested whether it "might not have

a tendency to lessen the influence which the Congress would wish to extend to the utmost of their power, to facilitate and succeed the operations of the war." In consequence of this hint, General Lee, in a note to General Burgoyne, declined to meet him. The correspondence between the two generals was published, and was commented on in the journals.*

Washington's first care on taking the command was to ascertain the actual condition and position of the army, and to obtain a knowledge of the numbers and designs of the enemy. This with his usual activity and perseverance, he had accomplished in a week to such an extent as to make the following report to the President of Congress:

CAMP AT CAMBRIDGE, *July* 10, 1775.

"SIR.— I arrived safe at this place on the third instant, after a journey attended with a good deal of fatigue, and retarded by necessary attentions to the successive civilities which accompanied me in my whole route.

"Upon my arrival, I immediately visited the several posts occupied by our troops; and as soon as the weather permitted, reconnoitered those of the enemy. I found the latter strongly intrenched on Bunker's Hill, about a mile from Charlestown, and advanced about half a mile from the place of the late action, with their sentries extended about 150 yards on this side of the narrowest part of the neck leading from this place to Charlestown. Three floating batteries lie in Mystic river near their camp, and one twenty-gun ship below the ferry-place, between Boston and Charlestown. They also have a battery on Copp's Hill, on the Boston side, which much annoyed our troops in the late attack.† Upon the Neck, they have also deeply

* Frothingham, "Siege of Boston."

† At Bunker's Hill.

intrenched and fortified. These advanced guards, till last Saturday morning, occupied Brown's houses, about a mile from Roxbury meeting-house, and twenty rods from their lines; but at that time, a party from General Thomas's camp surprised the guard, drove them in, and burned the houses. The bulk of their army, commanded by General Howe, lies on Bunker's Hill, and the remainder on Roxbury Neck, except the light horse, and a few men in the town of Boston.

"On our side, we have thrown up intrenchments on Winter and Prospect Hills — the enemy's camp in full view, at the distance of little more than a mile. Such intermediate points as would admit a landing, I have since my arrival taken care to strengthen down to Sewall's farm, where a strong intrenchment has been thrown up. At Roxbury, General Thomas has thrown up a strong work on the hill, about 200 yards above the meeting-house; which with the brokenness of the ground, and a great number of rocks, has made that pass very secure. The troops raised in New Hampshire, with a regiment from Rhode Island, occupy Winter Hill; a part of those from Connecticut, under General Putnam, are on Prospect Hill. The troops in this town are entirely of the Massachusetts; the remainder of the Rhode Island men are at Sewall's farm. Two regiments of Connecticut, and nine of the Massachusetts, are at Roxbury. The residue of the army, to the number of about 700, are posted in several small towns along the coast, to prevent the depredations of the enemy.

"Upon the whole, I think myself authorized to say, that considering the great extent of line, and the nature of the ground, we are as well secured as could be expected in so short a time, and under the disadvantages we labor. These consist in a want of engineers to construct proper

works and direct the men, a want of tools, and a sufficient number of men to man the works in case of an attack. You will observe by the proceedings of the council of war, which I have the honor to inclose, that it is our unanimous opinion, to hold and defend these works as long as possible. The discouragement it would give the men, and its contrary effects on the ministerial troops, thus to abandon our encampment in their face, formed with so much labor, added to the certain destruction of a considerable and valuable extent of country, and our uncertainty of finding a place in all respects so capable of making a stand, are leading reasons for this determination. At the same time, we are very sensible of the difficulties which attend the defense of lines of so great extent,* and the dangers which may ensue from such a division of the army.

"My earnest wish to comply with the instructions of the Congress in making an early and complete return of the state of the army has led into an involuntary delay of addressing you, which has given me much concern. Having given orders for this purpose immediately on my arrival, and unapprised of the imperfect disobedience which had been paid to those of the like nature from General Ward, I was led from day to day to expect they would come in, and therefore detained the messenger. They are not now so complete as I could wish; but much allowance is to be made for inexperience in forms, and a liberty which had been taken (not given) on this subject. These reasons, I flatter myself, will no longer exist; and of consequence, more regularity and exactness will in future exist. This with a necessary attention to the lines, the movements of the ministerial troops, and our immediate security, must be my apology, which I beg you

* Twelve miles.

to lay before Congress with the utmost duty and respect.

"We labor under great disadvantages for want of tents; for though they have been helped out by a collection of now useless sails from the seaport towns, the number is far short of our necessities. The colleges and houses of this town are necessarily occupied by the troops, which affords another reason for keeping our present situation. But I most sincerely wish the whole army was properly provided to take the field, as I am well assured, that (besides greater expedition and activity in case of alarm) it would highly conduce to health and discipline. As materials are not to be had here, I would beg leave to recommend the procuring a further supply from Philadelphia as soon as possible.

"I should be extremely deficient in gratitude as well as justice, if I did not take the first opportunity to acknowledge the readiness and attention which the Provincial Congress and different committees have shown, to make everything as convenient and agreeable as possible. But there is a vital and inherent principle of delay incompatible with military service, in transacting business through such numerous and different channels. I esteem it therefore my duty to represent the inconvenience which must unavoidably ensue from a dependence on a number of persons for supplies, and submit it to the consideration of Congress, whether the public service will not be best promoted by appointing a commissary-general for these purposes. We have a striking instance of the preference of such a mode in the establishment of Connecticut, as their troops are extremely well provided under the direction of Mr. Trumbull, and he has at different times assisted others with various articles. Should my sentiments happily coincide with those of your honors on this subject, I beg leave to recommend Mr. Trumbull as a very proper

person for this department. In the arrangement of troops collected under such circumstances, and upon the spur of immediate necessity, several appointments are omitted, which appear to be indispensably necessary for the good government of the army — particularly a quartermaster-general, a commissary of musters, and a commissary of artillery. These I must earnestly recommend to the notice and provision of the Congress.

"I find myself already much embarrassed for want of a military chest. The embarrassments will increase every day; I must therefore request that money may be forwarded as soon as possible. The want of this most necessary article will (I fear) produce great inconveniences, if not prevented by an early attention. I find the army in general, and the troops raised in Massachusetts in particular, very deficient in necessary clothing. Upon inquiry, there appears no probability of obtaining any supplies in this quarter; and on the best consideration of this matter I am able to form, I am of opinion that a number of hunting shirts (not less than 10,000), would, in a great degree, remove this difficulty in the cheapest and quickest manner. I know nothing, in a speculative view, more trivial, yet, if put in practice, would have a happier tendency to unite the men, and abolish those provincial distinctions which lead to jealously and dissatisfaction.

"In a former part of this letter I mentioned the want of engineers. I can hardly express the disappointment I have experienced on this subject — the skill of those we have being very imperfect, and confined to the mere manual exercise of cannon, whereas the war in which we are engaged requires a knowledge comprehending the duties of the field and fortification. If any persons thus qualified are to be found in the southern Colonies, it

would be of great public service to forward them with all expedition.

"Upon the article of ammunition I must re-echo the former complaints on this subjects. We are so exceedingly destitute that our artillery will be of little use without a supply both large and seasonable. What we have must be reserved for the smallarms, and that managed with the utmost frugality. * * *

"The state of the army you will find ascertained with tolerable precision in the returns which accompany this letter. Upon finding the number* of men to fall so far short of the establishment, and below all expectation, I immediately called a council of the general officers, whose opinion (as to the mode of filling up the regiments, and providing for the present exigency) I have the honor of inclosing, together with the best judgment we are able to form of the ministerial troops. From the number of boys, deserters, and negroes, that have been enlisted in the troops of this province, I entertain some doubts whether the number required can be raised here; and all the general officers agree that no dependence can be put on the militia for a continuance in camp, or regularity and discipline during the short time they may stay. This unhappy and devoted province has been so long in a state of anarchy, and the yoke has been laid so heavily on it, that great allowances are to be made for troops raised under such circumstances. The deficiency of numbers, discipline, and stores, can only lead to the conclusion, that their spirit has exceeded their strength. But at the same time, I would humbly submit to the consideration of Congress the propriety of making some further provision of men from the other Colonies. If these regiments should be completed to their establishment, the dismission

*The actual number at this time was 14,500.

of those unfit for duty on account of their age or character would occasion a considerable reduction; and at all events, they have been enlisted upon such terms that they may be disbanded when the other troops arrive. But should my apprehensions be realized, and the regiments here not filled up, the public cause would suffer by an absolute dependence upon so doubtful an event, unless some provision is made against such a disappointment.

"It requires no military skill to judge of the difficulty of introducing proper discipline and subordination into an army, while we have the enemy in view, and are in daily expectation of an attack; but it is of so much importance that every effort will be made which time and circumstances will admit. In the meantime I have a sincere pleasure in observing that there are materials for a good army — a great number of able-bodied men, active, zealous in the cause, and of unquestionable courage. * * *

"Generals Gates and Sullivan have both arrived in good health.

"My best abilities are at all times devoted to the service of my country; but I feel the weight, importance, and variety of my present duties too sensibly, not to wish a more immediate and frequent communication with the Congress. I fear it may often happen in the course of our present operations that I shall need that assistance and direction from them which time and distance will not allow me to receive."*

We have copied nearly the whole of this letter, in order not only to give the details of the condition of the army at this time on Washington's own authority, but also to show the style which he then thought proper to adopt in his communications to Congress. At a later period less deference was expressed, from the necessity of the case.

*Washington's Official Letters.

In his letter above quoted, Washington by no means exaggerated the disorderly and destitute condition of the army. Though the rolls showed 17,000 men, including the sick and absent, the number present fit for duty was only 14,500; so that new recruits had to be sought from the governments of the New England Colonies. The irregularities in dress were soon remedied in part by the adoption of the hunting shirt as recommended by Washington in his letter. The want of a system for obtaining supplies was severely felt. The troops from Connecticut had a proper commissariat, under Mr. Trumball's direction, as we have seen; but those who came from the other Colonies were not so well furnished. Individuals brought to camp their own provisions on their own horses. In some parts committees of supplies were appointed who purchased necessaries at the public expense, sent them on to camp, and distributed them to such as were in want, without any regularity or system; the country afforded provisions, and nothing more was wanting to supply the army than proper systems for their collection and distribution.

Other articles, though equally necessary, were almost wholly deficient, and could not be procured but with difficulty. On the 4th of August (1775), the whole stock of powder in the American camp, and in the public magazines of the four New England provinces, would make but little more than nine rounds a man.

The continental army remained in this destitute condition for a fortnight or more. This was generally known among themselves, and was also communicated to the British by a deserter; but they, suspecting a plot, would not believe it.

A supply of a few tons was sent on to them from the committee of Elizabethtown, but this was done privately, lest the adjacent inhabitants, who were equally destitute,

should stop it for their own use. The public rulers in Massachusetts issued a recommendation to the inhabitants not to fire a gun at beast, bird, or mark, in order that they might husband their little stock for the more necessary purpose of shooting men. A supply of several thousand pounds weight of powder was soon after obtained from Africa, in exchange for New England rum. This was managed with so much address, that every ounce for sale in the British forts on the African coasts, was purchased up and brought off for the use of the Americans.

Embarrassments from various quarters occurred in the formation of a continental army. The appointment of general officers made by Congress was not satisfactory. Enterprising leaders had come forward with their followers on the commencement of hostilities, without scrupulous attention to rank. When these were all blended together, it was impossible to assign to every officer the station which his services merited, or his vanity demanded. Materials for a good army were collected. The husbandmen who flew to arms were active, zealous, and of unquestionable courage; but to introduce discipline and subordination among freemen, who were habituated to think for themselves, was an arduous labor.

The want of system and of union, under proper hands, pervaded every department. From the circumstance that the persons employed in providing necessaries for the army were unconnected with each other, much waste and unnecessary delays were occasioned. The troops of the different Colonies came into service under variant establishments — some were enlisted with the express condition of choosing their officers. The rations promised by the local Legislatures varied both as to quantity, quality, and price. To form one uniform mass of these discordant materials, and to subject the licentiousness of independent

freemen to the control of military discipline, was a delicate and difficult business.

Washington however, not discouraged by the arduous nature of the task, at once began to mature his plans for bringing order out of confusion. He arranged the army into six brigades of six regiments each, in such a manner that the troops from the same Colony should be brought together, as far as practicable, and act under a commander from that Colony.* The whole force was thrown into three grand divisions. General Ward commanded the right wing at Roxbury; General Lee, the left at Winter Hill; and the center was commanded by General Putnam. General Washington, from his headquarters at Cambridge, directed the whole. Method and punctuality were introduced. The officers and privates were taught to know their respective places, and to have the mechanism and movements as well as the name of an army.

Gates, who had served with Washington in the unfortunate expedition of Braddock, and had been appointed by Congress adjutant-general, was now performing excellent service in disciplining the army. and accustoming the soldiers to habits of order and regularity. He was a Briton by birth, and since the French War had resided in Virginia, where he owned an estate. He had been a frequent visitor at Mount Vernon, but had recently adopted habits of distance and reserve toward Washington.

Among the members of Washington's military family were his first aid, Colonel Mifflin, of Philadelphia, recently appointed; his second aid, John Trumbull, son of the Governor of Connecticut; and Joseph Reed, his secretary, a lawyer of Philadelphia, who had received a part of his education in England, had taken an early part in the

* Sparks, "Life of Washington," p. 136.

revolutionary controversy, and exerted much influence on the patriotic side. On these gentlemen devolved a principal part of the duty of entertaining the numerous visitors who resorted to the headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief at Craigie House. Washington cared little for the convivialities of the table, and it was his habit, after remaining at it a short time, to leave the company with his aids and secretary, and retire to his private apartment, where the labor of thinking and writing on the immense and complicated business of his station awaited him.

He had already planted the "original germ of the Continental Army," and was carefully fostering its growth. The officers were commissioned anew by Congress, and the system of uniform organization was gradually acquiring form and consistency. When the rules and regulations prescribed by Congress were presented to the soldiers, they objected to them as inconsistent with the terms of their original enlistment. Washington reasoned with them, but wisely abstained from coercion, leaving it optional with the men to subscribe the articles or not; but making the subscription a necessary condition with all new recruits.

His intercourse with the Continental Congress was a more difficult affair. This body possessed very limited powers. Unlike the present Congress, it had no direct control over the people, and could only obtain men, money, and supplies, by recourse to the Provincial Legislatures, whose compliance with its requisitions depended on their resources, and their attachment to the cause of liberty. Still it had the supreme disposal of affairs, and its directions were never openly resisted. The members of Congress however were at this time divided in opinion as to the means of obtaining redress for those grievances which were the cause of the war. Some were timid, and

longed for returning peace on any reasonable terms, but the majority were resolute in opposition to the mother country. Most of the members were distrustful of military power as dangerous to the very liberties for which they were contending.

Washington perceived this feeling in Congress, and respected it for its motive. It interfered with the active and comprehensive measures which he desired to pursue, but it caused no relaxation in his efforts for the general welfare; nor was any feeling on this delicate subject ever permitted to appear in his conversation or correspondence.

The formation of the whole military system of the country devolved upon him. His correspondence with Congress shows that almost invariably important measures originated with him, were suggested by him, and were sanctioned and aided by them. His letters were read to the House when in session, and almost every important resolution respecting the army was the result of his recommendation. Every attentive reader of American history is acquainted with this fact. But although conscious of power, Washington was conscientiously scrupulous in its exercise. He referred everything to Congress on which it was proper for them to take action; and was careful to avoid the slightest appearance of usurping powers not belonging properly to his office. It often happened therefore that the service was embarrassed, and the Commander-in-Chief greatly perplexed, by the distance of Congress from the scene of action and the slowness of its movements even in times of great danger and emergency.

In addition to his intercourse with Congress, Washington corresponded with the local authorities of the several Colonies, in whom was lodged, as we have already seen, the real power of aiding his operations by furnish-

ing men and supplies. This intercourse with the different Governors, Legislatures, conventions, and committees of safety, however, made him well acquainted with the actual condition of the country in all its details, and enabled him to apply his own admirable administrative talents with precision and effect, as well as to make his real character and noble designs thoroughly known to the people, in whose cause he was laboring with so much zeal, assiduity, and effect. "They saw that he was the very man whom the exigencies of the service and the country demanded; and they felt safe in listening to counsels, and obeying commands, which evidently proceeded from one whose spirit was as just, and enlightened, and candid, as it was noble and majestic, and in which moderation, wisdom, and firmness of the highest order, were harmoniously combined with the deepest and most glowing enthusiasm of the patriot and the hero."*

One of the earliest instances of Washington's correspondence with the provincial authorities took place soon after his taking the command at Cambridge, and it was in an affair of the utmost importance to the welfare of the country. The Legislature of Massachusetts and the Governor of Connecticut applied to him for detachments from the army for the protection of such parts of their sea-coast as were exposed to predatory attacks from the British cruisers. This brought up the question as to the whole system on which the war was to be conducted. Should the army be liable to have detachments taken from it and distributed over the country on application from the local authorities, or should it be retained in one compact body, always ready for attack or defense.

Washington at once perceived the fatal consequences of establishing so bad a precedent in the outset of the

* C. W. Upham, "Life of General Washington."

contest as that which was desired by Massachusetts and Connecticut; and the following answer which he addressed (July 31, 1775) to the speaker of the General Assembly of Massachusetts evinces that, as usual, he was equal to the occasion:

"SIR.— I have considered the application made to me yesterday from the General Court, with all the attention due to the situation of the people in whose behalf it is made, and the respect due to such a recommendation. Upon referring to my instructions, and consulting with those members of Congress who are present, as well as the general officers, they all agree that it would not be consistent with my duty to detach any part of the army now here on any particular provincial service. It has been debated in Congress and settled, that the militia, or other internal strength of each province, is to be applied for defense against those small and particular depredations, which were to be expected, and to which they were supposed to be competent. This will appear the more proper, when it is considered that every town, and indeed every part of our sea-coast, which is exposed to these depredations, would have an equal claim upon this army.

"It is the misfortune of our situation which exposes us to these ravages, and against which, in my judgment, no such temporary relief could possibly secure us. The great advantage the enemy have of transporting troops, by being masters of the sea, will enable them to harass us by diversions of this kind; and should we be tempted to pursue them upon every alarm, the army must either be so weakened as to expose it to destruction, or a great part of the coast be still left unprotected. Nor, indeed, does it appear to me that such a pursuit would be attended with the least effect. The first notice of such an excursion would be its actual execution; and long before any troops

could reach the scene of action, the enemy would have an opportunity to accomplish their purpose and retire. It would give me great pleasure to have it in my power to extend protection and safety to every individual; but the wisdom of the General Court will anticipate me in the necessity of conducting our operations on a general and impartial scale, so as to exclude any just cause of complaint and jealousy.

"I beg, sir, you will do me the honor to communicate these sentiments to the General Court, and to apologize for my involuntary delay, as we were alarmed this morning by the enemy, and my time was taken up in giving the necessary directions.

"I shall be happy in every opportunity of showing my very great respect and regard for the General Court of Massachusetts Bay, and am, sir, etc."

This letter could not be otherwise than satisfactory to Massachusetts and the whole country. It settled the question, and established the precedent which was followed throughout the war. "It was established as a rule, that attacks of the enemy at isolated points along the coast must be repelled by the militia in the vicinity, except when the continental army was in a condition to make detachments without jeopardizing the common cause."*

The necessity of keeping the army unbroken by detachments was sufficiently apparent at this time, from the really formidable force opposed to it. General Gage's army in Boston number full 11,000 regular troops† in fine

* Sparks, "Life of Washington."

† In the last week in July, 1775, the number of inhabitants was stated at 6,753; the number of troops, with their dependents, women, and children, at 13,600. The town became sickly, both among the people and the troops, for neither had been accustomed

condition, burning for action; and he was assisted by Generals Howe, Clinton, and Burgoyne, who were justly regarded as among the ablest officers in the service of Great Britain.

General Gage had served as a colonel in Braddock's expedition; and there had subsisted between him and Washington a warm friendship, until the recent active part which both had taken on opposite sides in the revolutionary contest, had thrown them widely apart. An incident of the siege estranged them forever.

Certain officers and men, taken by the British in the battle of Bunker's Hill, had been thrown into the prison for common felons in Boston, and as report said, very ill-treated. When intelligence of this affair reached Washington, August 11th, he promptly transmitted the following letter to General Gage:

"SIR.— I understand that the officers engaged in the cause of liberty and their country, who, by the fortune of war, have fallen into your hands, have been thrown, indiscriminately, into a common jail, appropriated for felons; that no consideration has been had for those of the most respectable rank, when languishing with wounds and sickness; and that some have been amputated in this unworthy situation.

"Let your opinion, sir, of the principles which actuate them, be what it may, they suppose that they act from the noblest of all principles, a love of freedom and their country. But political principles, I conceive, are foreign

to live on salt provisions. "We are in the strangest state in the world," a lady writes, August 10th, "surrounded on all sides. The whole country is in arms, and intrenched. We are deprived of fresh provisions, subject to continual alarms and cannonadings, the Provincials being very audacious, and advancing near to our lines, since the arrival of Generals Washington and Lee to command them." — *Frothingham, Siege of Boston.*

to this point. The obligations arising from the right of humanity, and claims of rank, are universally binding and extensive, except in case of retaliation. These, I should have hoped, would have dictated a more tender treatment of those individuals, whom chance of war had put in your power. Nor can I forbear suggesting its fatal tendency to widen that unhappy breach, which you, and those ministers under whom you act, have repeatedly declared your wish is to see forever closed.

"My duty now makes it necessary to apprise you, that for the future, I shall regulate all my conduct toward those gentlemen who are, or may be, in our possession, exactly by the rule you shall observe toward those of ours, now in your custody.

"If severity and hardship mark the line of your conduct, painful as it may be to me, your prisoners will feel its effects. But if kindness and humanity are shown to ours, I shall with pleasure consider those in our hands as only unfortunate, and they shall receive from me that treatment to which the unfortunate are ever entitled.

"I beg to be favored with an answer as soon as possible, and am, sir, your very humble servant."

General Gage replied to this carefully worded communication in the following insolent and insulting terms:

"SIR.— To the glory of civilized nations, humanity and war have been compatible, and humanity to the subdued has become almost a general system. Britons are pre-eminent in mercy, have outgrown common examples, and overlooked the criminal in the captive. Upon these principles your prisoners, whose lives, by the law of the land, are destined to the cord, have hitherto been treated with care and kindness, and more comfortably lodged than the King's troops, in the hospitals; indiscriminately,

it is true, for I acknowledge no rank that is not derived from the King.

"My intelligence from your army would justify some recriminations. I understand there are some of the King's faithful subjects, taken some time since by the rebels, laboring like negro slaves to gain their daily subsistence, or reduced to the wretched alternative to perish by famine, or take arms against their King and country. Those who have made the treatment of the prisoners in my hands, or of your other friends in Boston, a pretense for such measures, found barbarity upon falsehood.

"I would willingly hope, sir, that the sentiments of liberality, which I have always believed you possess, will be exerted to correct these misdoings. Be temperate in political disquisition; give free operation to truth, and punish those who deceive and misrepresent; and not only the effects, but the cause, of this unhappy conflict will be removed. Should those, under whose usurped authority you act, control such a disposition, and dare to call severity retaliation, to God, who knows all hearts, be the appeal of the dreadful consequences," etc.

Washington's indignation at the receipt of this letter must have been great. His reply however is strictly consistent with his usual calmness and dignity:

"I addressed you," he writes, "on the 11th instant, in terms which gave the fairest scope for humanity and politeness, which were supposed to form a part of your character. I remonstrated with you on the unworthy treatment shown to the officers and citizens of America, whom the fortune of war, chance, or a mistaken confidence, had thrown into your hands. Whether British or American, mercy, fortitude, and patience are most pre-eminent; whether our virtuous citizens, whom the hand of tyranny has forced into arms to defend their wives, their children,

and their property, or the mercenary instruments of lawless domination, avarice, and revenge, best deserve the appellation of rebels, and the punishment of that cord, which your affected clemency has forborne to inflict; whether the authority under which I act is usurped, or founded upon the genuine principles of liberty, were altogether foreign to the subject. I purposely avoided all political disquisition; nor shall I now avail myself of those advantages, which the sacred cause of my country, of liberty, and of human nature, give me over you; much less shall I stoop to retort and invective; but the intelligence you say you have received from our army requires a reply. I have taken time, sir, to make a strict inquiry, and find it has not the least foundation in truth. Not only your officers and soldiers have been treated with the tenderness due to fellow-citizens and brethren, but even those execrable parricides, whose counsels and aid have deluged their country with blood, have been protected from the fury of a justly enraged people. Far from compelling or permitting their assistance, I am embarrassed with the numbers who crowd to our camp, animated with the purest principles of virtue and love to their country.

"You affect, sir, to despise all rank not derived from the same source with your own. I cannot conceive one more honorable than that which flows from the uncorrupted choice of a brave and free people, the purest source and original fountain of all power. Far from making it a plea for cruelty, a mind of true magnanimity and enlarged ideas would comprehend and respect it.

"What may have been the ministerial views which have precipitated the present crisis, Lexington, Concord, and Charlestown, can best declare. May that God to whom you then appeal judge between America and you. Under his providence, those who influence the councils of America

and all the other inhabitants of the united Colonies, at the hazard of their lives, are determined to hand down to posterity those just and invaluable privileges which they received from their ancestors.

"I shall now, sir, close my correspondence with you perhaps forever. If your officers, our prisoners, receive a treatment from me different from that which I wished to show them, they and you will remember the occasion of it."

General Gage must have felt, on reading this letter, his own utter littleness in comparison with his correspondent. His conduct was as impolitic as it was insolent. By setting at naught all the rules of honorable warfare, and intimating that the highest American officers would be treated as criminals, he made retaliation indispensable. Washington therefore gave orders that the British prisoners in his hands should receive the same treatment as was known to be practiced on the American prisoners in Boston. They were accordingly marched off to Northampton, to be closely confined in jail. This was in strict compliance with the laws of war. But Washington, unwilling to punish the innocent for the crime of the guilty, countermanded the order for their close confinement before they reached Northampton, and directions were sent by Colonel Reed, his secretary, that they should be at liberty to go abroad on their parole, and should have every indulgence consistent with their security.

Soon after this affair the companies of riflemen from Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, raised by order of Congress, arrived at the camp in Cambridge. Dr. Thacher thus describes them in his "Military Journal:"

"Several companies of riflemen, amounting, it is said, to more than 1,400 men, have arrived here from Pennsyl-

vania and Maryland, a distance of from 500 to 700 miles. They are remarkably stout and hardy men, many of them exceeding six feet in height. They are dressed in white frocks, or rifle shirts, and round hats. These men are remarkable for the accuracy of their aim, striking a mark with great certainty at 200 yards distance. At a review, a company of them, while on a quick advance, fired their balls into objects of seven inches in diameter, at the distance of 250 yards. They are now stationed on our lines, and their shot have frequently proved fatal to British officers and soldiers who expose themselves to view, even at more than double the distance of common musket shot."*

* The British officers, about this time, were much annoyed at the success of the American sentinels in dispersing handbills among their rank and file. One was framed, entitled "An Address to the Soldiers;" another contained the following comparison:

Prospect Hill.	Bunker's Hill.
1. Seven dollars a month.	1. Three pence a day.
2. Fresh provisions, and in plenty.	2. Rotten salt pork.
3. Health.	3. The scurvy.
4. Freedom, ease, affluence, and a good farm.	4. Slavery, beggary, and want.

"These bills," says a letter, July 24th, "are blown into their camp, and get into the hands of their soldiers, without the officers being able to prevent it. Major Bruce complained, at an interview the other day, of such usage. We retorted his decoying our sentries from their posts, two rascals having left us a day or two before, by his or some other officer's means. Colonel Reed also sent to General Gage a copy of the declaration of the united Colonies, who pronounced its contents to be 'as replete with deceit and falsehood as most of their (the American's) publications.'"—*Frothingham, Siege of Boston.*

One of these companies was commanded by Daniel Morgan, who was subsequently so much distinguished as a general. His men were so serviceable in the war that the mention of "Morgan's riflemen" has long been familiar to the readers of the revolutionary history.

In addition to this seasonable addition to his force, Washington was now receiving reinforcements of militia from the New England Colonies.

CHAPTER IV.

WASHINGTON SENDS A DETACHMENT TO CANADA.

1775, 1776.

WHILE the events which we have just related were passing in the camp before Boston, General Schuyler, who, it will be recollected, had been intrusted with the military command of the province of New York, had been preparing to enter Canada. A resolution of Congress had authorized him to take possession of St. John's and Montreal as soon as he should find it practicable; and he had written to Washington, from Ticonderoga, on the 31st of July (1775), informing him of his preparations for crossing the lake.

Washington proposed to aid him by sending a detachment from the army at Cambridge, which should march through Maine to attack Quebec. This plan is described in the following extract from his letter to General Schuyler of the 20th of August:

"The design of this express is to communicate to you a plan of an expedition which has engaged my thoughts for several days. It is to penetrate into Canada by way of Kennebec river, and so to Quebec, by a route ninety miles below Montreal. I can very well spare a detachment for this purpose of 1,000 or 1,200 men, and the land carriage by the route proposed is too inconsiderable to make an objection.

"If you are resolved to proceed, which I gather from your last letter is your intention, it would make a diversion

that would distract Carleton and facilitate your views. He must either break up and follow this party to Quebec, by which he will leave you a free passage, or he must suffer that important place to fall into our hands — an event that would have a decisive effect and influence on the public interests. There may be some danger that such a sudden incursion might alarm the Canadians and detach them from that neutrality which they have hitherto observed, but I should hope that, with suitable precautions and a strict discipline, any apprehensions and jealousies might be removed. The few whom I have consulted upon it approve it much, but the final determination is deferred until I hear from you. You will therefore, by the return of this messenger, inform me of your ultimate resolution. If you mean to proceed, acquaint me as particularly as you can with the time and force, what late accounts you have had from Canada, and your opinion as to the sentiments of the inhabitants, as well as those of the Indians, upon a penetration into their country; what number of troops are at Quebec, and whether any men-of-war, with all other circumstances which may be material in the consideration of a step of such importance. Not a moment's time is to be lost in the preparations for this enterprise, if the advices received from you favor it. With the utmost expedition, the season will be considerably advanced, so that you will dismiss the express as soon as possible."*

A month later he writes to Congress an account of the starting of the expedition and its design.

* Your Excellency's letter of the 8th inst. I received yesterday. I am happy to learn that the troops under the command of Colonel Arnold were to march so soon. I hope our people will commit no depredations in Canada; all possible care will be taken of it; but yet I have many fears on that score, as they stole thirty-two sheep at Isle aux Noix, contrary to the most pointed orders.— *Sparks, Correspondence of the Revolution.*

"I am now to inform the honorable Congress," he says, "that, encouraged by the repeated declarations of the Canadians and Indians and urged by their requests, I have detached Colonel Arnold, with 1,000 men, to penetrate into Canada by way of Kennebec river, and, if possible, to make himself master of Quebec. By this maneuver I proposed either to divert Carleton from St. John's, which would leave a free passage to General Schuyler, or, if this did not take effect, Quebec, in its present defenseless state, must fall into his hands an easy prey. I made all possible inquiry as to the distance, the safety of the route, and the danger of the season being too far advanced; but found nothing in either to deter me from proceeding, more especially as it met with very general approbation from all whom I consulted upon it. But, that nothing might be omitted to enable me to judge of its propriety and probable consequences, I communicated it by express to General Schuyler, who approved of it in such terms that I resolved to put it in immediate execution. They have now left this place seven days, and, if favored with a good wind, I hope soon to hear of their being safe in Kennebec river."

In order to understand thoroughly the object and the history of this expedition of Arnold to Quebec, it is necessary to give a general sketch of the joint operations of the expedition sent from New York about the same time, which was intended to co-operate with him in occupying Canada.

Congress had early turned its attention toward Canada and endeavored to gain the co-operation or at least to secure the neutrality of the inhabitants in its dispute with Great Britain. The Congress of the preceding year had circulated an address to the Canadians, evidently intended to render them disaffected to the British administration,

and to make them enter into the sentiments and measures of the other provinces. Although that address did not make on the minds of the Canadians all that impression which was intended and desired, yet it was not altogether without effect, for the great body of the people wished to remain neutral in the contest.

Congress mistook the reluctance of the Canadians to engage in active operations against them for a decided partiality to their cause, and resolved to anticipate the British by striking a decisive blow in that quarter. In this purpose they were encouraged by the easy success of the enterprise against the forts on the lakes, and by the small number of troops then in Canada. They appointed General Schuyler commander of the expedition, with General Montgomery under him.

Early in September (1775), these officers, with about 1,000 men, made an attempt on Fort St. John, situated on the River Sorel, which flows from Lake Champlain and joins the St. Lawrence; but found it expedient to retire to Isle aux Noix, at the entrance of the lake, about twelve miles above the fort, and wait for reinforcements.

Meanwhile General Schuyler was taken ill and returned to Albany, leaving the command in the hands of General Montgomery, with instructions to prosecute the enterprise on receiving the expected reinforcements. The reinforcements arrived; the attack on Fort St. John was renewed; and, after a vigorous defense, it surrendered about the middle of November. In it the Americans found a considerable number of brass and iron cannon, howitzers, and mortars, a quantity of shot and small shells, about 800 stand of smallarms, and some naval stores; but the powder and provisions were nearly exhausted.

During the siege of Fort St. John, Fort Chamblée had been taken, which furnished General Montgomery with a

plentiful supply of provisions, of which he stood greatly in need. General Carleton, who was on his way from Montreal to relieve the garrison, had been defeated, and Col. Ethan Allen, who had made an unauthorized attack on Montreal, was overcome and taken prisoner.

On the fall of Fort St. John, General Montgomery advanced against Montreal, which was in no condition to resist him. Governor Carleton, sensible of his inability to defend the town, quitted it, and next day General Montgomery entered the place. A body of provincials under Colonel Easton took post at the mouth of the Sorel, and, by means of an armed vessel and floating batteries, commanded the navigation of the St. Lawrence. The British force, which had retreated down the river from Montreal, consisting only of about 120 soldiers, with several officers, under General Prescott, and accompanied by Governor Carleton, in eleven vessels, seeing it impracticable to force the passage, surrendered by capitulation. The vessels contained a considerable quantity of provisions, arms, and ammunition, which furnished a seasonable supply to the Americans. About midnight of the day before the capitulation, Governor Carleton escaped down the river in a boat with muffled oars and safely reached Quebec.

It was now the 19th of November (1775), and the severe weather which had set in was very unfavorable to military operations. General Montgomery, a young man of superior talents and high spirit, found himself in extremely unpleasant circumstances. He was at the head of a body of men, many of whom were not deficient in personal courage, but were strangers to military subordination. The term of service for which numbers of them were engaged was near an end, and, already weary of the hardships of war, they clamorously demanded a discharge. Hitherto his career had been successful, and he was ambi-

tious of closing the campaign by some brilliant achievement, which might at once elevate the spirits of the Americans and humble the pride of the British ministry. With these views, even at that rigorous season of the year, he hastened toward Quebec, although he found it necessary to weaken his little army, which had never exceeded 2,000 men, by discharging such of his followers as had become weary of the service.

About the middle of September (1775), the detachment of 1,100 men, under Colonel Arnold, was sent, as we have seen, from the camp at Cambridge, by Washington, with orders to proceed across the country against Quebec, by a route which had not been explored and was little known. The party embarked at Newbury, steered for the Kennebec, and ascended that river. But their progress was impeded by rapids, by an almost impassable wilderness, by bad weather, and by want of provisions. They separated into several divisions. After encountering many difficulties, the last division, under Colonel Enos, was unwilling to proceed, and returned to the camp at Cambridge.* But the other divisions, under Arnold, pressed forward amidst incredible hardships and privations, and triumphed over obstacles nearly insuperable. For a month they toiled through a rough, barren, and uninhabited wilderness, without seeing a human habitation or the face of an individual, except those of their own party, and with very scanty provisions. At length, on the 9th of November, Arnold, with his force much diminished, arrived at Point Levi, opposite Quebec.

His appearance was not unexpected, for the Lieutenant-

* Enos, on his arrival at the camp, was put under arrest by Washington's orders. He was afterward tried for his defection, and acquitted. He then resigned his commission and retired to Vermont.— *Sparks, Writings of Washington.*

Governor had been for some time apprised of his march. In the early part of his progress, Arnold had met an Indian, to whom, although a stranger, he had imprudently intrusted a letter to General Schuyler, under cover to a friend in Quebec. The Indian, instead of faithfully delivering the letter according to the directions which he had received, carried it to the Lieutenant-Governor, who, in order to prevent the Americans from passing the river, immediately removed all the canoes from Point Levi, and began to put the city in a posture of defense, which before might easily have been surprised. On discovering the arrival of Arnold at Point Levi, the British commander stationed two vessels of war in the river to guard the passage; and, at that interesting crisis, Colonel McLean, who had retreated before Montgomery, arrived from the Sorel with about 170 newly-raised troops to assist in the defense of the place.

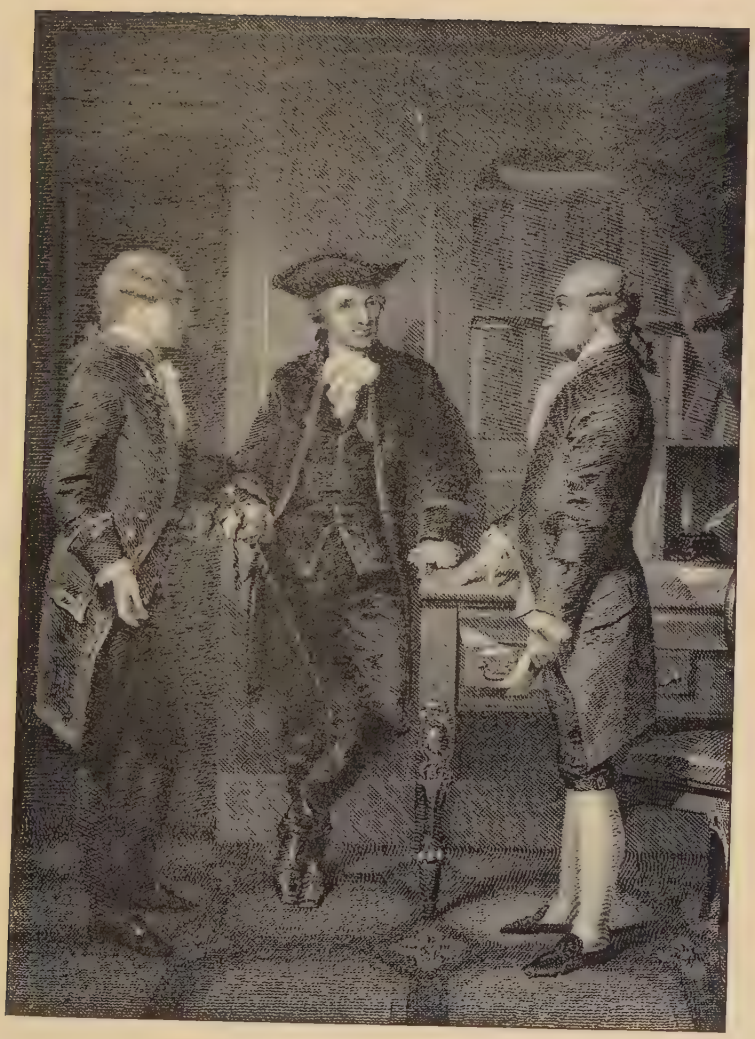
Notwithstanding all the vigilance of the British, on the night of the 14th of November Arnold crossed the river with 500 men, in thirty-five canoes, and landed unperceived near the place where the brave and enterprising Wolfe had landed about sixteen years before, thence named Wolfe's Cove. He had provided scaling ladders, but was unable to carry them over the river along with his troops, and consequently was not in a condition to make an immediate attempt on the town. Instead however of concealing himself till he could bring forward his scaling ladders, and then make a sudden and unexpected attack by night, he marched part of his troops in military parade in sight of the garrison, and so put the British fully on their guard. He wished to summon them to surrender, but they fired on his flag of truce and refused to hold any intercourse with him. He therefore, on the 19th of the month, turned his back on Quebec and marched to Point

aux Trembles, about twenty miles above the city, where General Montgomery, with the force under his command, joined him on the 1st of December.

Soon after Arnold's retreat, Governor Carleton arrived in Quebec and made every exertion to put the place in a state of defense. Having brought the scaling ladders across the river, General Montgomery, with the whole of the American force, appeared before Quebec on the 5th of December (1775). The garrison was then more numerous than the army which came to take the place. So greatly was the American force reduced that it scarcely amounted to 1,000 men, while General Carleton had about 1,500 soldiers, militia, seamen, and volunteers under his command.

General Montgomery sent a flag of truce to summon the garrison to surrender, but it was fired upon, as that of Arnold had been. He therefore, in the depth of a Canadian winter, and in the most intense cold, erected batteries; but his artillery was too light to make any impression on the fortifications. He now determined to storm the town, and the assault was made on the morning of the 31st of December (1775).

About 4 o'clock in the morning, in the midst of a violent storm of snow, two feints and two real attacks were simultaneously made. The real attacks were conducted by Montgomery and Arnold. Montgomery, advancing at the head of about 200 men, fell by the first discharge of grapeshot from the works. Several of his best officers being killed, his division retreated. Arnold, at the head of about 300 men, in a different quarter, maintained a fierce and obstinate conflict for some time; but was at last wounded and repulsed. The death of Montgomery was the subject of much regret, as he had been universally loved and esteemed. On assembling after the assault, the



BARON DE KALB INTRODUCING LAFAYETTE TO SILAS DEANE.

Americans could not muster many more than 400 effective men, who chose Arnold their commander, and, in the hope of receiving reinforcements, resolved to remain in the vicinity of Quebec.

Carleton, the Governor, whether from policy or humanity, treated the prisoners with kindness.

The Americans were not ignorant of their own great inferiority in point of numbers to the garrison, and were not without apprehension of being attacked; but, although the garrison was three times more numerous than the blockading army, yet it was of such a mixed and precarious nature that Carleton did not deem it prudent to march out against the enemy.

A small reinforcement from Massachusetts reached the American camp, and all the troops that could be spared from Montreal marched to join their countrymen before Quebec; but the month of February (1776) was far advanced before the army amounted to 960 men. Arnold however resumed the siege, but his artillery was inadequate to the undertaking and made no impression on the works. Although unsuccessful against the town, he defeated a body of Canadians who advanced to relieve it.

When the Americans entered the province many of the inhabitants were well disposed toward them, but by their ill-behavior they forfeited the good-will and provoked the hostility of the Canadians. They compelled the people, at the point of the bayonet, to furnish them with articles below the current prices; gave illegal or unsigned certificates for goods which they had received, and, in consequence, many of the certificates were rejected by the quartermaster-general; they made promises and did not perform them; and they insulted and abused the people when they demanded payment of their just debts. By such unworthy conduct they alienated the affections of the Cana-

dians, who considered Congress as bankrupt, and their army as a band of plunderers.

On hearing of such scandalous misconduct, Congress ordered justice to be done to the Canadians, and the strictest military discipline to be observed. But in Canada the tide of popular sentiment and feeling was turned against the Americans, who, by their dishonorable practices, had awakened a spirit of indignation and hostility, which all the policy of Governor Carleton had been unable to excite.

While the American army lay before Quebec the troops caught the smallpox from a woman who had been a nurse in a hospital of the city, and the loathsome disease spread rapidly among them. In order to mitigate the ravages of this destructive malady, many of the men inoculated themselves, regardless of orders to the contrary. The reinforcements which were daily arriving had recourse to the same practice, and so general was the infection that, on the 1st of May (1776), although the army amounted to 2,000 men, not more than 900 were fit for duty. In this diseased state of the troops, medicines and everything necessary for the sick were wanting. The men were also scattered for want of barracks. Major-General Thomas, who had been appointed to the command of the American army in Canada, arrived in camp on the 1st of May. He found the troops enfeebled by disease, ill-supplied with provisions, and with only a small quantity of ammunition. The river was opening below, and he was well aware that as soon as ships could force their way through the ice the garrison would be reinforced. On the 5th of May therefore he resolved to retreat toward Montreal, and on the evening of the same day he received certain information that a British fleet was in the river. Next morning, some of the ships, by great exertion and with much danger,

pressed through the ice into the harbor, and landed some troops.

The Americans were preparing to retire. General Carleton marched out to attack them; but, instead of waiting his approach, they made a precipitate retreat, leaving behind them their sick, baggage, artillery, and military stores. Many of those who were ill of the smallpox escaped from the hospitals and concealed themselves in the country, where they were kindly entertained by the Canadians till they recovered and were able to follow their countrymen. General Carleton could not overtake the American army, but he took about 100 sick prisoners, whom he treated with his characteristic humanity.

The Americans retreated about forty-five miles and then halted a few days, but afterward proceeded to Sorel in a deplorable condition and encamped there. In this interval some reinforcements arrived, but General Thomas was seized with the smallpox and died. He was succeeded in the command by General Sullivan.

The British had several military posts in Upper Canada, and the Americans established one at the Cedars, a point of land which projects into the St. Lawrence about forty miles above Montreal. Captain Forster, who had marched from Oswegatchie, appeared before this post with a company of regulars and a considerable number of Indians, and the American commanding officer surrendered the place after a short resistance. An American party of about 100 men, under Major Sherburne, left Montreal to assist their countrymen at the Cedars, but as they approached that place, on the day after the surrender, and ignorant of that event, they were suddenly and unexpectedly attacked by a body of Indians and Canadians. After defending themselves for some time, the Americans were

overpowered, and many of them fell under the tomahawks of the Indians. The rest were made prisoners.

Arnold, who in the month of January had been raised to the rank of brigadier-general, and who then commanded at Montreal, was desirous of recovering the Cedars and of relieving the prisoners there; and for these purposes marched toward that place, at the head of about 800 men. But, on his approach, Captain Forster gave him notice that unless he agreed to a cartel, which had already been signed by Major Sherburne and some other officers, the Indians would put all the prisoners to death. In these circumstances, Arnold reluctantly signed the cartel and retired. Congress long hesitated and delayed to sanction this agreement.

Before the end of May the British force in Canada was greatly increased; and, including the German mercenaries, was estimated at 13,000 men. That force was widely dispersed, but Three Rivers, about ninety miles above Quebec and as much below Montreal, was the general point of rendezvous. A considerable detachment, under General Frazer, had already arrived there. That detachment General Sullivan wished to surprise, and appointed General Thompson to command the troops in the expedition sent out for that purpose. The enterprise failed; Thompson was made prisoner and his detachment dispersed, but without any great loss.

The royal military and naval forces having been collected at Three Rivers, a long village so named from its contiguity to a river which empties itself into the St. Lawrence by three mouths, advanced by land and water toward the Sorel. General Sullivan had retreated up that river, and General Burgoyne, who had left Boston and joined Carleton, was ordered cautiously to pursue him. On the 15th of June (1776), General Arnold quitted Montreal,

crossed the river at Longueille, marched on Chamblée, and conducted the army to Crown Point, with little loss in the retreat. Thus terminated the invasion of Canada, in which the American army endured great hardships and sustained considerable loss, without any apparent advantage to the cause in which it was engaged.

It is certain nevertheless that Washington acted with his usual good judgment in sending out the expedition under Arnold. It came very near capturing Quebec, and only failed under a combination of unfortunate circumstances, against the occurrence of which no human foresight could provide.

CHAPTER V.

WASHINGTON EXPELS THE BRITISH FROM BOSTON.

1775–1776.

CONSIDERING the strength of the British army in Boston, it might be matter of surprise that General Gage had made no serious attack upon the besieging army; but his experience of the valor and determination of the colonists, as well as of the formidable mode of warfare adopted in the battles of Lexington and Bunker Hill, had taught him to respect them as soldiers. Writing to Lord Dartmouth, he says: "The trials we have had show the rebels are not the despicable rabble too many have supposed them to be, and I find it owing to a military spirit encouraged among them for a few years past, joined with an uncommon degree of zeal and enthusiasm, that they are otherwise."

Gage was desirous of occupying New York, but would not venture to evacuate Boston without express orders from the government. He therefore determined to winter in Boston, and began to make preparations for occupying the houses in the town as barracks for the soldiery.

While this was going forward he received a summons from the government commanding his return to England (September 26, 1775), "in order to give His Majesty exact information of everything that it may be necessary to prepare, as early as possible, for the operations of the next year, and to suggest to His Majesty such matters in rela-

tion thereto as his knowledge and experience of the service enabled him to furnish."

In replying to Lord Dartmouth, October 1st, General Gage recommended the measure, which the ministry adopted in the ensuing year, of abandoning New England and occupying New York. "I am of opinion," he wrote, "that no offensive operations can be carried on to advantage from Boston. On the supposition of a certainty of driving the rebels from their intrenchments, no advantage would be gained but reputation; victory could not be improved, through the want of every necessary to march into the country. The loss of men would probably be great, and the rebels be as numerous in a few days as before their defeat; besides, the country is remarkably strong and adapted to their way of fighting."

General Gage now prepared to depart for England, expecting to return after the King and the ministry should have obtained the "exact information" which they so much desired, and in which they had, sooth to say, been woefully deficient ever since the controversy began. His departure was attended with the usual formalities, such as a fulsomely flattering address from the council, praising him for all the virtues which he did not possess; and another from the loyal inhabitants, a little more "reserved in its indorsement of his proceedings." Gage, in his replies, charged all the troubles of the people on designing, ambitious leaders, who had "erected a tyranny upon the most free, happy, and lenient government." He embarked on the 10th of October (1775) for England, and soon found that his services in America for the future would be dispensed with.* His successor, General Howe,† was an

* Frothingham, "Siege of Boston."

† Howe was a brother to Viscount Howe, killed at Ticonderoga in 1758; and also of Lord Howe, the admiral.

abler officer and a more popular man. His views respecting the military operations to be pursued coincided however with those of his predecessor. Writing to Lord Dartmouth, October 9th, he says, "that the opening of the campaign from this quarter would be attended with great hazard, as well from the strength as from the intrenched position the Americans had taken." He recommended an evacuation of Boston, and desired reinforcements to arrive early in the spring.

Meantime Washington, having no knowledge of the enemy's design to remain inactive and to go into winter quarters without attempting offensive operations, was impatient for action. He was prevented however from any attempt on the town by his want of powder. Only small quantities could be collected and in no proportion to the demand. Apprehensive that the enemy might discover this deficiency and attack and disperse his army, he resorted to a variety of expedients to conceal his situation. His own officers even were not aware how little powder was in store. The proposal to surprise the enemy was nevertheless entertained by him, and referred to a council of war, as early as September. It was induced by complaints among the people of the inactivity of the army. The eyes of all were fixed on Washington, and it was very unreasonably expected that he would, by a bold exertion, free the town of Boston from the British troops. The dangerous situation of public affairs led him to conceal the real scarcity of arms and ammunition, and with that magnanimity which is characteristic of great minds, to suffer his character to be assailed rather than vindicate himself by exposing his many wants. There were not wanting persons who, judging from the superior numbers of men in the American army, boldly asserted that, if the Commander-in-Chief were not desirous of prolonging his

importance at the head of an army, he might by a vigorous exertion gain possession of Boston. Such suggestions were reported and believed by many, while they were uncontradicted by the General, who chose to risk his fame rather than expose his army and his country.

In the following extract from his letter to the President of Congress, of September 21 (1775), he refers to the proposed attack as well as to the destitute condition of the army:

"The state of inactivity in which this army has lain for some time by no means corresponds with my wishes to relieve my country, by some decisive stroke, from the heavy expense its subsistence must create. After frequently reconnoitering the situation of the enemy in the town of Boston, collecting all possible intelligence, and digesting the whole, a surprise did not appear to me wholly impracticable, though hazardous. I communicated it to the general officers some days before I called them to a council, that they might be prepared with their opinions. The result I have the honor of inclosing. I cannot say that I have wholly laid it aside; but new events may occasion new measures. Of this I hope the honorable Congress can need no assurance — that there is not a man in America who more earnestly wishes such a termination of the campaign as to make the army no longer necessary.

"It gives me great pain to be obliged to solicit the attention of the honorable Congress to the state of this army, in terms which imply the slightest apprehension of being neglected. But my situation is inexpressibly distressing; to see the winter fast approaching upon a naked army; the time of their service within a few weeks of expiring, and no provision yet made for such important events. Added to these, the military chest is totally ex-

hausted; the paymaster has not a single dollar in hand; the commissary-general assures me he has strained his credit for the subsistence of the army to the utmost. The quartermaster-general is precisely in the same situation, and the greater part of the troops are in a state not far from mutiny, upon the deduction from their stated allowance. I know not to whom I am to impute this failure, but I am of opinion, if the evil is not immediately remedied, and more punctually observed in future, the army must absolutely break up. I hoped I had so fully expressed myself on this subject (both by letter and to those members of the Congress who honored the camp with a visit), that no disappointment could possibly happen; I therefore hourly expected advice from the paymaster that he had received a fresh supply, in addition to the $172,000 delivered him in August; and thought myself warranted to assure the public creditors that in a few days they should be satisfied. But the delay has brought matters to such a crisis as admits of no further uncertain expectation. I have therefore sent off this express, with orders to make all possible dispatch. It is my most earnest request that he may be returned with all possible expedition, unless the honorable Congress have already forwarded what is so indispensably necessary."

In a letter to Mr. Warren, Speaker of the Massachusetts Assembly, we find a still more graphic picture of suffering. In this communication he says:

"I promised the gentlemen who did me the honor to call upon me yesterday, by order of your House, that I would inquire of the quartermaster-general, and let them know to-day, what quantity of wood and hay were necessary to supply this army through the winter. I accordingly did so, and desired General Gates this morning to inform you that it was his (the quartermaster's) opinion

it would require 10,000 cords of the first and 200 tons of the latter to answer our demands; but the hurry, in which we have been all day engaged, caused him to forget it, till a fresh complaint brought it again to remembrance.

"When the committee were here yesterday I told them I did not believe we had then more than four days' stock of wood beforehand. I little thought that we had scarce four hours', and that the different regiments were upon the point of cutting each other's throats for a few standing locusts near their encampments to dress their victuals with. This however is the fact; and, unless some expedient is adopted by your honorable body to draw more teams into the service, or the quartermaster-general is empowered to impress them, this army (if there comes a spell of rainy and cold weather) must inevitably disperse, the consequences of which need no animadversions of mine.

"It has been a matter of great grief to me to see so many valuable plantations of trees destroyed. I endeavored (whilst there appeared a possibility of restraining it) to prevent the practice; but it is out of my power to do it. From fences to forest trees, and from forest trees to fruit trees, is a natural advance to houses, which must next follow. This is not all; the distress of the soldiers in the article of wood will, I fear, have an unhappy influence upon their enlisting again. In short, sir, if I did not apprehend every evil that can result from the want of these two capital articles, wood especially, I would not be so importunate. My anxiety on this head must plead my excuse. At the same time I assure you that, with great respect and esteem, I am, sir, your most obedient servant."

Washington's humanity and courtesy are finely illustrated by an incident which took place in October, 1775. Two armed vessels, sent to intercept two brigantines, understood to be bound from England to Quebec with arms

and ammunition, failed in that object, but attacked St. John's, plundered the inhabitants, and brought off several prisoners. On their being brought to the camp at Cambridge, Washington severely reprimanded the captors, set the prisoners at liberty, treated them with the utmost kindness, restored the plundered property, and sent them to their homes. The acting Governor of St. John's, who was one of the prisoners, expressed the liveliest gratitude to Washington for the kind treatment received from him.

As the year (1775) drew near a close, Washington found himself embarrassed with a new and very serious difficulty. It had become necessary to form a new army. The term of service of the Connecticut and Rhode Island troops would expire on the 1st of December, and that of the remainder of the army at the end of that month. Congress had had the matter under consideration, and a committee, consisting of Dr. Franklin, Mr. Lynch, and Mr. Harrison, repaired to headquarters at Cambridge (October 18, 1775), and there, in conjunction with Washington, made arrangements for organizing, regulating, and supporting the continental army. It was presumed that the spirit which had hitherto operated on the yeomanry of the country would induce most of the same individuals to engage for another twelvemonth, but on experiment it was found that much of their military ardor had already evaporated. The first impulse of passion, and the novelty of the scene, had brought many to the field who had great objections against continuing in the military line. They found that to be soldiers required sacrifices of which, when they assumed that character, they had no idea. So unacquainted were the bulk of the people with the mode of carrying on modern war that many of them flew to arms with the delusive expectation of settling the whole dispute by a few decisive and immediate engagements. Experience soon

taught them that to risk life in open fighting was but a part of the soldier's duty.

The plan of organization proposed by Washington to the committee of Congress was adopted. It was to be twice as large as that of the enemy in Boston, and to consist of twenty-six regiments of eight companies each, besides riflemen and artillery, the whole amounting to 20,372 men. The term of service was to be for one year — an arrangement which, as will be seen, was a source of embarrassment which interfered with Washington's operations very seriously. But such was the jealousy of military power among the members of Congress and the people, that this system of short enlistments was persisted in throughout the war.

The committee of Congress remaining some time in Cambridge, Washington embraced the opportunity of conferring freely with them and learning what reliance could be placed on the efficient support of Congress in his future operations. This was more satisfactory than the written correspondence which he had hitherto maintained with the Congress, and he was enabled by personal intercourse with the committee to express his own views frankly and freely. All the proceedings of the committee were, on their return, approved by Congress.

The readiest means of obtaining supplies for the army was the fitting out of armed vessels for intercepting those sent from England for the enemy in Boston. Congress had hitherto made no provision for a navy, and Washington took on himself the responsibility of creating one. It was on a small scale indeed, but we should ever remember that to the Father of his Country is due the honor of founding the proud and glorious navy of the United States.

He had no instructions from Congress on the subject, but the public welfare demanded immediate action, and

he did not hesitate to take the necessary measures. He caused vessels to be procured in Salem, Beverly, Marblehead, and Plymouth, fitted out and manned by officers and sailors from the army. And he gave to the captains instructions to cruise against such vessels as were found in the service of the enemy, and seize all such as were laden with soldiers, arms, ammunition, or provisions. In a short time six armed schooners were under sail and cruising off the coast of New England.

One of these schooners, the Lee, commanded by Captain Manly, was particularly successful. On the 29th of November (1775) she took the brig Nancy, an ordnance vessel from Woolwich, containing a large brass mortar, several pieces of brass cannon, a large quantity of arms and ammunition, with all manner of tools, utensils, and machines, necessary for camps and artillery. Had Congress sent an order for supplies they could not have made out a list of articles more suitable to Washington's situation than what was thus providentially thrown into his hands.

In about nine days after, three ships, with various stores for the British army, and a brig from Antigua with rum, were taken by Captain Manly. Before five days more had elapsed, several other storeships were captured. By these means the distresses of the British troops in Boston were increased and supplies for the continental army were procured. Naval captures, being unexpected, were matter of triumph to the Americans and of surprise to the British. The latter scarcely believed that the former would oppose them by land with a regular army, but never suspected that a people so unfurnished as they were with many things necessary for arming vessels would presume to attempt anything on the water. A spirit of enterprise, invigorated by patriotic zeal, prompted the hardy New England-

men to undertake the hazardous business, and their success encouraged them to proceed. Before the close of the year (1775), Congress determined to build five vessels of thirty-two guns, five of twenty-eight, and three of twenty-four.* While the Americans were fitting out

* Under date of May 8, 1902, Hon. Arthur D. Osborn, of New Haven, Conn., made an address in that city on "Armed Vessels of Connecticut During the Revolutionary War," in which he said:

"The more the history of our modest little State is studied, the more those who love Connecticut as the home of their ancestors will find in that history to stimulate their interest and gratify their pride. We cannot realize in the midst of our abundance with what slender resources our forefathers engaged in the Revolutionary War. In place of the complex machinery which produces for us such astonishing results with lightning speed, they had only the slow handiwork of craftsmen, dependent largely for their tools and materials on the mother country. And yet when the Revolutionary struggle commenced, the peaceful waters of Long Island Sound even then bore the beginnings of that mighty commerce which now passes through it, exceeding in volume and value all that enters New York harbor from foreign ports. The hardy men who peopled its Connecticut shores had already learned the arts of ship building and navigation, and they fitted out, manned, and equipped a fleet of armed vessels very early in the war. Their number was constantly increased until the Record shows a list of 180 vessels, carrying 1,380 guns and more than 6,000 men. This is the statement in the Revolutionary Record of the Naval Service of Connecticut, compiled from the list prepared by Lieutenant, afterward Rear-Admiral, George F. Emmons. This list does not include all the vessels which were furnished by Connecticut, but it is surprisingly large.

"Before the outbreak of the Revolution, New England had created a considerable commerce with European countries, with the West Indies, and along the coast, and the vessels, with the crews engaged in it, became the privateers and war vessels referred to by Admiral Emmons. Long Island Sound and especially New London afforded them harbors for rendezvous and refuge, and it is very likely that the attacks which they made upon British commerce instigated the expeditions along the coast of the Sound, which effected the burning of Fairfax. Norwalk, New London, and the capture of New Haven.

armed vessels, and before they had made any captures, an event took place which would have disposed a less determined people to desist from provoking the vengeance of the British navy.

"There were three classes of these vessels. First, the privateers which have already been referred to. The privateers carried from two to twenty guns and crews numbering from 25 to 100, and in a few cases 150 men. The guns were mostly six and twelve-pounders, with a few twenty-four pounders and some smaller guns. The vessels were from less than 100 to 250 tons.

"In the second class were included the vessels built by the State of Connecticut. In July, 1775, the General Assembly ordered two vessels to be bought and fitted for cruising. These were the 'Minerva' and the 'Spy.' In December, 1775, the General Assembly ordered a war vessel built, which was completed in May, 1776, and named the 'Defence' and rigged as a brig. She cruised off Boston under the command of Captain Harding, where she captured, after a spirited engagement, two transports with 210 soldiers on board, and the next day another transport with 112 soldiers. She was afterward chased into New London by two frigates. In 1777, she came under the command of Captain Samuel Smedley.

"The largest State vessel of Connecticut was the 'Oliver Cromwell,' of twenty guns, built at Saybrook in 1776.

"In the third class were the vessels built in the State under the orders of the Continental Congress. In 1775 the Continental Congress ordered a number of war vessels to be built; three to carry twenty-four guns, five twenty-eight guns, and five thirty-two guns. One of these was assigned to Connecticut and was built at Chatham, on the Connecticut river. She was named the 'Trumbull' and carried twenty-eight guns. Capt. Dudley Saltonstall was appointed to command her and afterward Capt. James Nicholson.

"Another vessel assigned to Connecticut was the thirty-six-gun ship 'Confederacy,' which was built on the Thames river, near Norwich.

"The havoc which these vessels made with the British merchant marine created consternation among their owners and brought loud remonstrances to the ears of the British ministry. All these vessels, the privateers, the State vessels, and the United States ships, were officered and manned by Connecticut men."

This was the burning of Falmouth (now Portland, Me.), which was brought about by a previous incident on the coast of Massachusetts.

The British naval forces were frequently engaged in destroying the armed American vessels which Washington had fitted out, as we have just seen, for cruisers. At Gloucester the Falcon sloop-of-war, having chased an American vessel into the harbor, dispatched three boats, with about forty men, to bring her off, when the party were so warmly received by the militia, who had collected on the shore, that the captain thought it necessary to send a reinforcement and to commence cannonading the town. A very smart action ensued, which was kept up for several hours, but resulted in the complete defeat of the assailants, leaving upward of thirty prisoners in the hands of the Americans.

This repulse excited the British to deeds of revenge upon several of the defenseless towns on the coast, and to declare that many of them should be reduced to ashes, unless the inhabitants consented to an unconditional compliance with all their demands. The burning of Falmouth seems to have been a consequence of this determination.

In compliance with a resolution of the Provincial Congress to prevent Tories from carrying out their effect, the inhabitants of Falmouth had obstructed the loading of a mast ship. The destruction of the town was therefore determined on, as an example of vindictive punishment. Captain Mowat, detached for that purpose with armed vessels* by Admiral Graves, arrived off the place on the

* The force consisted of a sixty-four, a twenty-gun ship, two sloops of eighteen guns, two transports, and 600 men. They took two mortars, four howitzers, and other artillery — a pretty formidable apparatus for setting fire to a small seaport village. The recent conflict at Gloucester had taught the enemy a lesson.

evening of the 17th of October (1775), and gave notice to the inhabitants that he would allow them two hours "to remove the human species."

Upon being solicited to afford some explanation of this extraordinary summons, he replied that he had orders to set on fire all the seaport towns from Boston to Halifax, and that he supposed New York was already in ashes. He could dispense with his orders, he said, on no terms but the compliance of the inhabitants to deliver up their arms and ammunition, and their sending on board a supply of provisions, and four of the principal persons of the town as hostages that they should engage not to unite with their countrymen in any kind of opposition to Britain; and he assured them that, on a refusal of these conditions, he should lay the town in ashes within three hours. Unprepared for the attack, the inhabitants, by entreaty, obtained the suspension of an answer till the morning, and employed this interval in removing their families and effects.

The next day Captain Mowat commenced a furious cannonade and bombardment, and a great number of people standing on the heights, were spectators of the conflagration, which reduced many of them to penury and despair. More than 400 houses and stores were burnt. Newport, R. I., being in a very exposed situation and threatened with a similar attack, was compelled to stipulate for a weekly supply to avert it.

An event of considerable importance occurred in October, which occasioned much surprise and speculation. It was the defection of Dr. Benjamin Church, who had long sustained a high reputation as a patriot and son of liberty. He had for some time been a member of the House of Representatives of Massachusetts, and had been appointed surgeon-general and director of the military hospitals at

Cambridge. This gentleman was detected in a traitorous correspondence with the enemy in Boston. A letter in cipher, written by him, was intrusted to the care of a female, with whom he was well acquainted, to be conveyed to Boston. On examination the woman absolutely refused to reveal the name of the writer till she was terrified by threats of severe punishment, when she named Dr. Church. He was greatly agitated and confounded, manifested marks of guilt, and made no attempt to vindicate himself. But after the letter was deciphered, and he had taken time to reflect, he used all his powers of persuasion to make it appear that the letter contained no information that would injure the American cause; and made a solemn appeal to heaven that it was written for the purpose of procuring some important intelligence from the enemy. He was tried, convicted, and expelled from the House of Representatives, and Congress afterward resolved, "that he be closely confined in some secure jail in Connecticut, without the use of pen, ink, or paper; and that no person be allowed to converse with him, except in the presence and hearing of a magistrate, or the sheriff of the county." He was finally permitted to depart from the country. He embarked for the West Indies; the vessel foundered at sea and all were lost.*

A skirmish occurred at Lechmere's Point on the 9th of November (1775), to which Washington refers in the following extract from a letter to Congress of the 11th, in which his situation and that of the army is feelingly described.

"The trouble I have in the arrangement of the army is really inconceivable. Many of the officers sent in their names to serve in expectation of promotion; others stood aloof, to see what advantage they could make for them-

* Thacher, "Military Journal."

selves; whilst a number who had declined have again sent in their names to serve. So great has the confusion arising from these and many other perplexing circumstances been that I found it absolutely impossible to fix this very interesting business exactly on the plan resolved on in the conference, though I have kept up to the spirit of it as near as the nature and necessity of the case would admit. The difficulty with the soldiers is as great, indeed more so, if possible, than with the officers. They will not enlist until they know their colonel, lieutenant-colonel, major, and captain; so that it was necessary to fix the officers the first thing, which is at last in some manner done, and I have given out enlisting orders.

"You, sir, can much easier judge than I can express the anxiety of mind I must labor under on the occasion, especially at this time, when we may expect the enemy will begin to act on the arrival of their reinforcements, part of which is already come and the remainder daily dropping in.

"I have other distresses of a very alarming nature. The arms of our soldiery are so exceedingly bad that I assure you, sir, I cannot place a proper confidence in them. Our powder is wasting fast, notwithstanding the strictest care, economy, and attention are paid to it. The long series of wet weather which we have had renders the greater part of what has been served out to the men of no use. Yesterday I had a proof of it, as a part of the enemy, about 400 or 500, taking the advantage of a high tide, landed at Lechmere's Point; we were alarmed, and of course ordered every man to examine his cartouch-box, when the melancholy truth appeared; and we were obliged to furnish the greater part of them with fresh ammunition.

"The damage done at the Point was the taking of a man, who watched a few horses and cows; ten of the latter

were carried off. Colonel Thompson marched down with his regiment of riflemen and was joined by Colonel Woodbridge, with a part of his and a part of Patterson's regiment, who gallantly waded through the water and soon obliged the enemy to embark under cover of a man-of-war, a floating battery, and the fire of a battery on Charlestown Neck. We have two of our men dangerously wounded by grapeshot from the man-of-war, and by a flag sent out this day we are informed the enemy lost two of their men."

General Putnam, who was on duty during the whole siege of Boston, and who enjoyed in a high degree the confidence of Washington, was intrusted with the bold undertaking of fortifying Cobble Hill, afterward called Barrell's Farm. It is the beautiful eminence which forms the site of the McLean Hospital. Here Putnam, with a strong detachment of the army, broke ground on the night of the 22d of November (1775), without the least annoyance from the enemy, whose works at Bunker Hill were very near.

Next day General Heath followed with another detachment to complete the works. The enemy were expected to sally out and attack the intrenching party, and Colonel Bond's regiment and the picket guard on Prospect Hill were ordered to support General Heath. But General Howe adhered to his policy of inaction till the works were completed. It was considered at the time to be the most perfect piece of fortification constructed by the Americans during the siege, and "on the day of its completion was named Putnam's Impregnable Fortress."*

Washington, knowing the weakness and destitution of his army in comparison with that of the enemy, considered his position at this time as extremely critical. "Our situation," he writes, November 28 (1775), "is truly

* Frothingham, "Siege of Boston."

alarming; and of this General Howe is well apprised, it being the common topic of conversation with the people who left Boston last Friday. No doubt when he is reinforced he will avail himself of the information."

Washington thus describes the works in addition to those at Cobble Hill, which were erected in November: "I have caused two half-moon batteries to be thrown up for occasional use, between Lechmere's Point and the mouth of Cambridge river, and another work at the causey going to Lechmere's Point, to command that pass and rake the little rivulet that runs by it to Patterson's Fort. Besides these I have been and marked out three places between Sewall's Point and our lines on Roxbury Neck, for works to be thrown up, and occasionally manned, in case of a sortie when the bay gets froze."

In December, 1775, notwithstanding the severe cold and a heavy fall of snow, Washington caused strong fortifications to be erected at Lechmere's Point. The enemy did not fire upon the intrenching party. Washington declares (December 15th) that he was unable to account for their silence, unless it were to lull him into a fatal security to favor some attempt they might have in view for the last of the month. "If this be their drift," he writes, "they deceive themselves, for, if possible, it has increased my vigilance, and induced me to fortify all the avenues to our camp, to guard against any approaches on the ice."

The expectation of an assault from the enemy was now general in the army, but the works at Lechmere's Point nevertheless went on. A causeway over the marsh leading to this point was completed on the 16th of December, and on the 17th General Putnam, with a detachment of 300 men, broke ground near the water side, within half a mile of a British man-of-war. A few shots from Cobble Hill drove one of the enemy's ships down the river below

the ferry. General Heath, with a second detachment, going to complete the works begun by Putnam, was assailed by a cannonade from the enemy's batteries, which lasted several days.

Washington and his staff visited the spot during this time, and the work was persisted in until it was completed, when it was considered as commanding Boston, so that in the event of the bombardment of the town being deemed advisable, it could easily have been effected from this point. "It will be possible," wrote Colonel Moylan, "to bombard Boston from Lechmere's Point. Give us powder and authority (for that, you know, we want, as well as the other), I say, give us these, and Boston can be set in flames."*

On the 11th of December, Mrs. Washington arrived at Cambridge, accompanied by her son, John Parke Custis, and his wife. She received a very hospitable welcome from the most distinguished families in Massachusetts. Her presence was, on this as well as on all similar subsequent occasions, hailed with enthusiasm by the army. Her present visit seems to have been induced by an apprehension of danger from the exposed situation of Mount Vernon, accessible as it was to British ships of war. She had no fears on that head herself, and whatever may have prompted her visit to the camp, the practice was continued through the subsequent campaigns of the war. In the winter time she was thus enabled to enjoy the society of her illustrious husband, and to cheer him in the midst of his labors and cares. Whenever active operations were to commence in the spring, she would return to Mount Vernon. On the present occasion, she remained at headquarters till after the close of the siege.

Early in December (1775) the Connecticut troops, availing themselves of the expiration of their term of en-

* Frothingham, "Siege of Boston."

listment, left the army. They had demanded a bounty as a condition of re-enlistment, and when it was refused became mutinous; "and deaf to the entreaties of their officers, and regardless of the contempt with which their own government threatened to treat them on their return, they had resolved to quit the lines on the 6th of December." At a convention, composed of a committee of the General Court of Massachusetts and officers of the army, it was decided to call in 3,000 of the Massachusetts minute-men, and 2,000 from New Hampshire, to man the lines, which would be fearfully weakened by their defection. They were to arrive on the 10th of December.

The Connecticut men did not wait for the coming in of the militia, but went off, many of them as early as the 1st of December. "Several got away," says Washington, "with their arms and ammunition."

Their places however were speedily filled by the reinforcements from Massachusetts and New Hampshire, who promptly and cheerfully complied with the call for their services. By the 18th of December this arrangement was completed. We may vainly attempt to imagine the intense anxiety Washington must have felt during the time which intervened between the departure of the old soldiers and the arrival of the fresh reinforcements. His lines, at many important points, were literally deserted. In writing to the President of Congress however, during this very interval (December 11 [1775]), he refers to it, among other matters, as a thing of no very great consequence: "The information I received," he writes, "that the enemy intended spreading the smallpox amongst us, I could not suppose them capable of. I now must give some credit to it, as it has made its appearance on several of those who last came out of Boston. Every necessary precaution has been taken to prevent its being communicated

to this army; and the General Court will take care that it does not spread through the country.

"I have not heard that any more troops are arrived at Boston, which is a lucky circumstance, as the Connecticut troops, I now find, are for the most part gone off. The houses in Boston are lessening every day; they are pulled down, either for firewood or to prevent the effects of fire, should we attempt a bombardment or an attack upon the town. Cobble Hill is strongly fortified, without any interruption from the enemy."

The reinforcements of Massachusetts and New Hampshire minute-men was only a temporary resource. The main thing which occupied the attention of Washington at this time was the obtaining of recruits for the Continental army. He was always of the opinion that little dependence could be placed upon militia in time of action, and this opinion was confirmed by many incidents of the war. He must therefore have been greatly chagrined and disappointed at the slow progress made in enlisting recruits for the continental service. The causes for this tardiness were sufficiently apparent.

The period of patriotic enthusiasm had, in some measure, passed away; numbers of officers consented conditionally to remain in the army, and many made no communication on the subject. Immediate decision was necessary; and in new orders, the Commander-in-Chief solemnly called upon them for a direct and unconditional answer to his inquiry. "The times," he observed, "and the importance of the great cause we are engaged in, allow no room for hesitation and delay. When life, liberty, and property are at stake; when our country is in danger of being a melancholy sense of bloodshed and desolation; when our towns are laid in ashes; innocent women and children driven from their peaceful habitations, exposed

to the rigors of an inclement season, to depend, perhaps, on the hand of charity for support; when calamities like these are staring us in the face, and a brutal enemy are threatening us, and everything we hold dear, with destruction from foreign troops, it little becomes the character of a soldier to shrink from danger, and condition for new terms. It is the General's intention to indulge both officers and soldiers who compose the new army, with furloughs for a reasonable time, but this must be done in such a manner as not to injure the service, or weaken the army too much at once."

The troops were assured that clothes, on reasonable terms, were provided "for those brave soldiers who intended to continue in the army another year." It was with great difficulty the arrangement of officers had been completed, so that recruiting orders might be issued. Recruiting officers were directed to "be careful not to enlist any persons suspected of being unfriendly to the liberties of America, or any abandoned vagabond, to whom all causes and countries are equal, and alike indifferent. The rights of mankind, and the freedom of America, would have numbers sufficient to support them without resorting to such wretched assistance. Let those who wish to put shackles upon freemen fill their ranks with, and place their confidence in, such miscreants." To aid the cause, popular songs were composed and circulated through the camp, calculated to inspire the soldiers with the love of country, and to induce them to engage anew in the public service. But unfortunately the army at this time was badly supplied with clothing, provisions, and fuel, and the consequent sufferings of the soldiers operating upon their strong desire to visit their homes prevented their enlistment in the expected numbers.

On the last day of December (1775), when the first term

of service expired, only 9,650 men had enlisted for the new army, and many of these were of necessity permitted to be absent on furlough. It was found impossible to retain the old troops a single day after their time expired. Washington, as we have seen, had called upon the governments of the neighboring provinces for detachments of militia to man his lines, and he had been highly gratified by the prompt compliance with his demand. In a letter to Congress he wrote: "The militia that are come in, both from this province and New Hampshire, are very fine-looking men, and go through their duty with great alacrity. The dispatch made, both by the people marching, and by the legislative powers in complying with my requisition, has given me infinite satisfaction."

In the space of time between that of disbanding the old army and of an effective force from the new recruits, the lines were often in a defenseless state; General Howe must have known the fact, but he still adhered to his fixed policy of inaction till the return of spring should permit the removal of the theater of war to New York. Besides these motives of policy, and probably positive instructions from the ministry, as reasons for remaining quiet, Howe had probably retained a very vivid recollection of General Prescott's defense of the little redoubt on Bunker's Hill, and did not deem it worth while to assail works erected under the auspices of Prescott, Putnam, and Washington, extending from Charlestown to Roxbury, some twelve miles.

"It is not," says General Washington in his communications to Congress, "in the pages of history to furnish a case like ours. To maintain a post, within musket-shot of the enemy, for six months together, without *ammunition*, and at the same time, to disband one army and recruit another, within that distance of twenty odd British regi-

ments, is more probably than ever was attempted. But if we succeed as well in the last, as we have heretofore in the first, I shall think it the most fortunate event of my whole life."

To defend the American lines with an incompetent number of troops, with defective arms, and without an adequate supply of ammunition; to disband one army and recruit another, in the face of 11,000 British soldiers, will be viewed as a hazardous measure, and will be supposed, with the organization and discipline of the men, to have employed every active power of the General; yet this did not satisfy his mind. He knew that Congress with solicitude contemplated more decisive measures, and that the country looked for events of greater magnitude. The public was ignorant of his actual situation, and conceived his means for offensive operations to be much greater than in reality they were; and from him expected the capture or expulsion of the British army in Boston. He felt the importance of securing the confidence of his countrymen by some brilliant action, and was fully sensible that his own reputation was liable to suffer, if he confined himself to measures of defense. To publish to his anxious country, in his vindication, the state of his army would be to acquaint the enemy with his weakness, and to involve his destruction.

The firmness and patriotism of Washington were displayed in making the good of his country an object of higher consideration than the applause of those who were incapable of forming a correct opinion of the propriety of his measures. On this and many other occasions during the war, he withstood the voice of the populace, rejected the entreaties of the sanguine, and refused to adopt the plans of the rash, that he might ultimately secure the great object of contention.

While he resolutely rejected every measure that in his calm and deliberate judgment he did not approve, he daily pondered over the practicability of a successful attack upon Boston. As a preparatory step, he had taken possession of Cobble Hill and Lechmere's Point, and upon them erected fortifications. These posts brought him within half a mile of the enemy's works on Bunker's Hill; and by his artillery, he drove the British floating batteries from their stations in Charles river. He erected floating batteries to watch the movements of his enemy, and to aid in any offensive operations that circumstances might warrant. He took the opinion of his general officers a second time respecting the meditated attack; they again unanimously gave their opinion in opposition to the measure, and this opinion was immediately communicated to Congress. Congress appeared still to favor the attempt, and that an apprehension of danger to the town of Boston might not have an undue influence upon the operations of the army had resolved, in December (1775), "That if General Washington and his council of war should be of opinion that a successful attack might be made on the troops in Boston, he should make it in any manner he might think expedient, notwithstanding the town and property therein might thereby be destroyed."

The inability of Washington to accomplish the great object of the campaign repeatedly pointed out by Congress was a source of extreme mortification; but he indulged in the hope of success in some military operations during the winter that would correspond with the high expectations of his country. In his reply to the president of Congress, on the reception of the resolution authorizing an attempt on the fortified posts in Boston, he observed: "The resolution relative to the troops in Boston, I beg the favor of you, sir, to assure Congress,

shall be attempted to be put in execution the first moment I see a probability of success, and in such a way as a council of officers shall think most likely to produce it; but if this should not happen as soon as you may expect, or my wishes prompt to, I request that Congress will be pleased to revert to my situation, and do me the justice to believe, that circumstances, and not want of inclination, are the cause of delay."

Early in January (1776) he accordingly summoned a council of war, at which Mr. John Adams, then a member of Congress, and Mr. James Warren, president of the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, were present; in which it was resolved: "That a vigorous attempt ought to be made on the ministerial troops in Boston before they can be reinforced in the spring, if the means can be provided, and a favorable opportunity shall offer." It was also advised: "That thirteen regiments of militia should be asked for from Massachusetts and the neighboring Colonies, in order to put them in a condition to make the attempt — the militia to assemble the 1st of February, and to continue, if necessary, until the 1st of March." The reinforcements thus obtained amounted to between four and five thousand men; but thus far the winter proved unusually mild, and the waters about Boston were not frozen. The General in his official communication to the National Legislature says: "Congress, in my last, would discover my motives for strengthening these lines with the militia; but whether, as the weather turns out exceedingly mild, insomuch as to promise nothing favorable from ice, and there is no appearance of powder, I shall be able to attempt anything decisive, time only can determine. No person on earth wishes more earnestly to destroy the nest in Boston than I do; no person would be willing to go greater lengths than I shall to accomplish it, if it shall

be thought advisable; but if we have neither powder to bombard with, nor ice to pass on, we shall be in no better situation than we have been in all the year. We shall be worse, because their works are stronger."

While anxiously waiting to embrace any favorable opportunity that might present to annoy the enemy, Washington seriously meditated upon the importance of establishing a permanent army. His experience enabled him to anticipate the evils that must ensue at the expiration of the period for which the present troops were engaged, and he bent the whole force of his mind to induce Congress seasonably to adopt measures to prevent them. In a letter to the President of Congress, dated February 9 (1776), he entered thus fully into the subject:

"The disadvantages attending the limited enlistment of troops are too apparent to those who are eye-witnesses of them, to render any animadversions necessary; but to gentlemen at a distance, whose attention is engrossed by a thousand important objects, the case may be otherwise.

"That this cause precipitated the fate of the brave, and much to be lamented, General Montgomery, and brought on the defeat which followed thereupon, I have not the most distant doubt; for had he not been apprehensive of the troops leaving him at so important a crisis, but continued the blockade of Quebec, a capitulation (from the best accounts I have been able to collect) must inevitably have followed. And that we were not at one time obliged to dispute these lines, under disadvantageous circumstances (proceeding from the same cause, to wit, the troops disbanding themselves before the militia could be got in), is to me a matter of wonder and astonishment, and proves that General Howe was either unacquainted with our situation, or restrained by his instructions from

putting anything to a hazard till his reinforcements should arrive.

"The instance of General Montgomery (I mention it because it is a striking one; for a number of others might be adduced) proves, that instead of having men to take advantage of circumstances, you are in a manner compelled, right or wrong, to make circumstances yield to a secondary consideration. Since the 1st of December (1775) I have been devising every means in my power to secure these encampments; and though I am sensible that we never have, since that period, been able to act upon the offensive, and at times not in a condition to defend, yet the cost of marching home one set of men, bringing in another, the havoc and waste occasioned by the first, the repairs necessary for the second, with a thousand incidental charges and inconveniences which have arisen, and which it is scarce possible to recollect or describe, amount to near as much as the keeping up a respectable body of troops the whole time, ready for any emergency, would have done. To this may be added that you never can have a well-disciplined army.

"To bring men well acquainted with the duties of a soldier requires time. To bring them under proper discipline and subordination not only requires time, but is a work of great difficulty; and in this army, where there is so little distinction between the officers and soldiers, requires an uncommon degree of attention. To expect then the same service from raw and undisciplined recruits as from veteran soldiers is to expect what never did, and perhaps never will, happen. Men who are familiarized to danger meet it without shrinking; whereas those who have never seen service often apprehend danger where no danger is. Three things prompt men to a regular discharge of their duty in time of action — natural bravery,

hope of reward, and fear of punishment. The two first are common to the untutored and the disciplined soldier, but the latter most obviously distinguishes the one from the other. A coward, when taught to believe that if he breaks his ranks and abandons his colors he will be punished with death by his own party, will take his chance against the enemy; but a man who thinks little of the one, and is fearful of the other, acts from present feelings, regardless of consequences.

"Again, men of a day's standing will not look forward; and from experience, we find that as the time approaches for their discharge, they grow careless of their arms, ammunition, camp utensils, etc. Nay, even the barracks themselves lay us under additional expense in providing for every fresh set, when we find it next to impossible to procure such articles as are absolutely necessary in the first instance. To this may be added the seasoning which new recruits must have to a camp and the loss consequent thereupon. But this is not all; men engage for a short, limited time only, have the officers too much in their power; for to obtain a degree of popularity, in order to induce a second enlistment, a kind of familiarity takes place, which brings on a relaxation of discipline, unlicensed furloughs, and other indulgences, incompatible with order and good government; by which means the latter part of the time for which the soldier was engaged is spent in undoing what you were laboring to inculcate in the first.

"To go into an enumeration of all the evils we have experienced in this late great change of the army, and the expenses incidental to it — to say nothing of the hazard we have run, and must run, between the discharging of one army and the enlistment of another, unless an enormous expense of militia be incurred — would greatly ex-

ceed the bounds of a letter. What I have already taken the liberty of saying will serve to convey a general idea of the matter; and therefore I shall, with all due reference, take the liberty to give it as my opinion, that if the Congress have any reason to believe that there will be occasion for troops another year, and consequently of another enlistment, they would save money and have infinitely better troops, if they were, even at a bounty of twenty, thirty, or more dollars, to engage the men already enlisted till January next (1777), and such others as may be wanted to complete the establishment, for and during the war. I will not undertake to say that the men can be had upon these terms; but I am satisfied that it will never do to let the matter alone, as it was last year, till the time of service was near expiring. The hazard is too great in the first place; in the next, the trouble and perplexity of disbanding one army, and raising another at the same instant, and in such a critical situation as the last was, is scarcely in the power of words to describe, and such as no man who has experienced it once will ever undergo again."

Unhappily, the reasons which first induced Congress to adopt the plan of short enlistments still had influence on that body, and on many of the general officers of the army; nor were they convinced of their error but by the most distressing experience. The ice now became sufficiently strong for General Washington to march his forces upon it to Boston; and he was himself inclined to risk a general assault upon the British posts, although he had not power to make any extensive use of his artillery; but his general officers in council voted against the attempt, with whose decision he reluctantly acquiesced. In his communication of their opinion to Congress, he observed: "Perhaps the irksomeness of my situation may have given

different ideas to me, from those which influence the judgment of the gentlemen whom I consulted, and might have inclined me to put more hazard than was consistent with prudence. If it had this effect I am not sensible of it, as I endeavored to give the subject all the consideration a matter of such importance required. True it is, and I cannot help acknowledging, that I have many disagreeable sensations on account of my situation; for to have the eyes of the whole continent fixed on me, with anxious expectation of hearing of some great event, and to be restrained in every military operation for the want of the necessary means to carry it on, is not very pleasing, especially as the means used to conceal my weakness from the enemy conceal it also from my friends, and add to their wonder."

Late in February (1776) the stock of powder was considerably increased, and the regular army amounted to 14,000 men, which was reinforced by 6,000 of the Massachusetts militia. Colonel Knox had volunteered to transport the cannon which had been taken by Allen and Arnold at Ticonderoga to Boston, and with incredible difficulty had at last accomplished his object; so that Washington now found himself comparatively well supplied with heavy ordnance.

The part of the harbor of Boston contiguous to Cambridge and Roxbury was frozen, which greatly facilitated the passage; and for crossing the water that remained up to the walls of Boston, a great number of boats had been provided. In addition to this, two floating batteries were stationed at the mouth of the river of Cambridge. It was known that the garrison suffered severely for the want of provisions, and that it was greatly enfeebled by fatigues and maladies. Washington had, besides, the greatest confidence in the valor and constancy of his sol-

diers. He accordingly assembled all the generals, and proposed to them his plan of attack. Ward and Gates opposed it, alleging that without incurring so great a risk the enemy might be forced to evacuate Boston by occupying the heights of Dorchester, which command the entire city. Washington did not conceal his dissatisfaction at this opposition, but he was constrained to acquiesce in the opinion of the majority. It was resolved therefore to take the position of the heights. At the suggestion of Generals Ward, Thomas, and Spencer, a great quantity of fascines and gabions had been prepared for this expedition.

The Americans, says Botta,* in order to occupy the attention of the enemy in another part, erected strong batteries upon the shore at Cobb's Hill, at Lechmere's Point, at Phipp's Farm, and at Lamb's Dam, near Roxbury. They opened a terrible fire in the night of the 2d of March (1776); the bombs, at every instant, fell into the city. The garrison was incessantly employed in extinguishing the flames of the houses in combustion, and in all the different services that are necessary in such circumstances. During this time, the Americans prepared themselves with ardor, or rather with joy, to take possession of the heights. Companies of militia arrived from all parts to reinforce the army. The night of the 4th of March (1776) was selected for the expedition; the chiefs hoped that the recollection of the events of the 5th of March (1770), when the first blood had been shed in Boston by the English, would inflame with new ardor, and a thirst of vengeance, those spirits already so resolute in their cause.

Accordingly in the evening of the 4th, all the arrangements being made, the Americans proceeded in profound

* Botta, "History of the War of Independence," vol. II, p. 36.

silence toward the peninsula of Dorchester. The obscurity of the night was propitious, and the wind favorable, since it could not bear to the enemy the little noise which it was impossible to avoid. The frost had rendered the roads easy. The batteries of Phipp's Farm, and those of Roxbury, incessantly fulminated with a stupendous roar.

Eight hundred men composed the van guard; it was followed by carriages filled with utensils of intrenchment, and 1,200 pioneers led by General Thomas. In the rear guard were 300 carts of fascines, of gabions, and bundles of hay, destined to cover the flank of the troops in the passage of the isthmus of Dorchester, which being very low, was exposed to be raked on both sides by the artillery of the English vessels.

All succeeded perfectly; the Americans arrived upon the heights, not only without being molested, but even without being perceived by the enemy.

They set themselves to work with an activity so prodigious, that by 10 o'clock at night, they had already constructed two forts, in condition to shelter them from small-arms and grape-shot; one upon the height nearest to the city, and the other upon that which looks toward Castle Island. The day appeared; but it prevented not the provincials from continuing their works, without any movement being made on the part of the garrison. At length, when the haze of the morning was entirely dissipated, the English discovered with extreme surprise the new fortifications of the Americans.

The English admiral having examined them declared that if the enemy was not dislodged from this position, his vessels could no longer remain in the harbor without the most imminent hazard of total destruction. The city itself was exposed to be demolished to its foundations at the pleasure of the provincials. The communication

also between the troops that guarded the isthmus of Boston, and those within the town, became extremely difficult and dangerous. The artillery of the Americans battered the strand, whence the English would have to embark in case of retreat. There was no other choice therefore left them, but either to drive the colonists from this station by dint of force, or to evacuate the city altogether.

General Howe decided for the attack and made his dispositions accordingly. Washington on his part, having perceived the design, prepared himself to repel it. The intrenchments were perfected with diligence; the militia were assembled from the neighboring towns, and signals were concerted to be given upon all the eminences which form a sort of cincture about all the shore of Boston, from Roxbury to Mystic river, in order to transmit intelligence and orders with rapidity from one point to the other.

Washington exhorted his soldiers to bear in mind the 5th of March (1770). Nor did he restrict himself to defensive measures; he thought also of the means of falling himself upon the enemy, if during or after the battle any favorable occasion should present itself. If the besieged, as he hoped, should experience a total defeat in the assault of Dorchester, his intention was to embark from Cambridge 4,000 chosen men, who rapidly crossing the arm of the sea should take advantage of the tumult and confusion, to attempt the assault of the town. General Sullivan commanded the first division; General Greene, the second. An attack was expected like that of Charlestown, and a battle like that of Breed's Hill. General Howe ordered ladders to be prepared to scale the works of the Americans. He directed Lord Percy to embark at the head of a considerable corps, and to land upon the flats near the point opposite Castle Island. The Americans, excited by the remembrance of the anniversary, and of

the battle of Breed's Hill, and by the continual exhortations of their chiefs, expected them, not only without fear, but with alacrity; but the tide ebbed, and the wind blew with such violence, that the passage over became impossible. General Howe was compelled to defer the attack to early the following morning. A tempest arose during the night, and when the day dawned, the sea was still excessively agitated. A violent rain came to increase the obstacles; the English general kept himself quiet. But the Americans made profit of this delay; they erected a third redoubt and completed the other works. Colonel Mifflin had prepared a great number of hogsheads, full of stones and sand, in order to roll them upon the enemy, when he should march up to the assault, to break his ranks and throw him into confusion, which might smooth the way to his defeat.

Having diligently surveyed all these dispositions, the English persuaded themselves that the contemplated enterprise offered difficulties almost insurmountable. They reflected that a repulse, or even a victory so sanguinary as that of Breed's Hill, would expose to a jeopardy too serious the English interests in America. Even in the case of success, it was to be considered that the garrison was not sufficiently numerous, to be able, without hazard, to keep possession of the peninsula of Dorchester, having already to guard not only the city, but the peninsula of Charlestown. The battle was rather necessary, and victory desirable, to save the reputation of the royal arms, than to decide the total event of things upon three shores. The advantages therefore could not compensate the dangers. Besides, the port of Boston was far from being perfectly accommodated to the future operations of the army that was expected from England; and General Howe himself had, some length of time before, received instructions from Lord Dartmouth, one of the Secretaries of

State, to evacuate the city and to establish himself at New York.

The want of a sufficient number of vessels had hitherto prevented him from executing this order. Upon all these considerations the English generals determined to abandon Boston to the power of the provincials.

This retreat however presented great difficulties. One hundred and fifty transports, great and small, appeared scarcely adequate to the accommodation of 10,000 men, the number to which the crews and the garrison amounted, without comprehending such of the inhabitants, as having shown themselves favorable to the royal cause, could not with safety remain. The passage was long and difficult; for with these emaciated and enfeebled troops, it could not be attempted to operate any descent upon the coasts. It was even believed to be scarcely possible to effect a landing at New York, although the city was absolutely without defense on the part of the sea. The surest course appeared to be to gain the port of Halifax; but besides the want of provisions, which was excessive, the season was very unfavorable for this voyage, at all times dangerous.

The winds that prevailed then blew violently from the northeast, and might drive the fleet off to the West Indies, and the vessels were by no means stocked with provisions for such a voyage. Besides, the territory of Halifax was a sterile country, from which no resource could be expected, and no provision could have been previously made there, since the evacuation of Boston and retreat to Halifax were events not anticipated. Nor could the soldiers perceive without discouragement that the necessity of things impelled them toward the north, apprised, as they were, that the future operations of the English army were to take place in the provinces of the center, and even in

those of the south. But their generals had no longer the liberty of choice. The Americans however being able by the fire of their artillery to interpose the greatest obstacles to the embarkation of the British troops, General Howe deliberated upon the means of obviating this inconvenience. Having assembled the selectmen of Boston, he declared to them that the city being no longer of any use to the King, he was resolved to abandon it, provided that Washington would not oppose his departure. He pointed to the combustible materials he had caused to be prepared to set fire, in an instant, to the city, if the provincials should molest him in any shape. He invited them to reflect upon all the dangers which might result, for them and their habitations, from a battle fought within the walls; and he assured them that his personal intention was to withdraw peaceably, if the Americans were disposed, on their part, to act in the same manner. He exhorted them therefore to repair to the presence of Washington, and to inform him of what they had now heard.

The selectmen waited upon the American general, and made him an affecting representation of the situation of the city. It appears, from what followed, that he consented to the conditions demanded; but the articles of the truce were not written. It has been pretended that one of them was that the besieged should leave their munitions of war; this however cannot be affirmed with assurance. The munitions were indeed left; but it is not known whether it was by convention, or from necessity. The Americans remained quiet spectators of the retreat of the English. But the city presented a melancholy spectacle; notwithstanding the orders of General Howe, all was havoc and confusion. Fifteen hundred loyalists, with their families and their most valuable effects, hastened with, infinite dejection of mind, to abandon a residence which

had been so dear to them, and where they had so long enjoyed felicity. The fathers carrying burdens, the mothers their children, ran weeping toward the ships; the last salutations, the farewell embraces of those who departed, and of those who remained, the sick, the wounded, the aged infants, would have moved with compassion the witnesses of their distress, if the care of their own safety had not absorbed the attention of all.

The carts and beasts of burden were become the occasion of sharp disputes between the inhabitants who had retained them, and the soldiers who wished to employ them. The disorder was also increased by the animosity that prevailed between the soldiers of the garrison and those of the fleet; they reproached each other mutually, as the authors of their common misfortune. With one accord however they complained of the coldness and ingratitude of their country, which seemed to have abandoned, or rather to have forgotten, them upon these distant shores, a prey to so much misery, and to so many dangers. For since the month of October (1775) General Howe had not received from England any order or intelligence whatever, which testified that the government still existed and had not lost sight of the army in Boston.

Meanwhile a desperate band of soldiers and sailors took advantage of the confusion to force doors and pillage the houses and shops. They destroyed what they could not carry away. The entire city was devoted to devastation, and it was feared every moment the flames would break out to consummate its destruction.

The 15th of March (1776) General Howe issued a proclamation forbidding every inhabitant to go out of his house before 11 o'clock in the morning, in order not to disturb the embarkation of the troops, which was to have taken place on this day. But an east wind prevented

their departure; and to pass the time, they returned to pillaging. In the meanwhile, the Americans had constructed a redoubt upon the point of Nook's Hill, in the peninsula of Dorchester, and having furnished it with artillery, they entirely commanded the isthmus of Boston and all the southern part of the town. It was even to be feared that they would occupy Noddle's Island, and establish batteries, which sweeping the surface of the water across the harbor would have entirely interdicted the passage to the ships and reduced the garrison to the necessity of yielding at discretion. All delay became dangerous; consequently the British troops and the loyalists began to embark the 17th of March (1776) at 1 in the morning; at 10, all were on board. The vessels were overladen with men and baggage; provisions were scanty, confusion was everywhere. The rear guard was scarcely out of the city when Washington entered it on the other side, with colors displayed, drums beating, and all the forms of victory and triumph. He was received by the inhabitants with every demonstration of gratitude and respect due to a deliverer. Their joy broke forth with the more vivacity, as their sufferings had been long and cruel. For more than sixteen months they had endured hunger, thirst, cold, and the outrages of an insolent soldiery, who deemed them rebels. The most necessary articles of food were risen to exorbitant prices.

Horse flesh was not refused by those who could procure it. For want of fuel, the pews and benches of churches were taken for this purpose; the counters and partitions of warehouses were applied to the same use; and even houses not inhabited were demolished for the sake of the wood. The English left a great quantity of artillery and munitions. Two hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, of different caliber, were found in Boston, in Castle Island,

and in the intrenchments of Bunker's Hill, and the Neck. The English had attempted, but with little success in their haste, to destroy, or to spike these last pieces; others had been thrown into the sea, but they were recovered. There were found, besides, four mortars, a considerable quantity of coal, of wheat, and of other grains, and 150 horses.

The embarkation of the British was attended with many circumstances of distress and embarrassment. On the departure of the royal army from Boston, a great number of the inhabitants, attached to their sovereign, and afraid of public resentment, chose to abandon their country. From the great multitude to depart, there was no possibility of procuring purchasers for their furniture, neither was there a sufficiency of vessels for its convenient transportation. Mutual jealousy subsisted between the army and navy; each charging the other as the cause of some part of their common distress. The army was full of discontent. Reinforcements, though long promised, had not arrived. Both officers and soldiers thought themselves neglected. Five months had elapsed since they had received any advice of their destination. Wants and inconveniences increased their ill-humor. Their intended voyage to Halifax subjected them to great dangers. The coast, at all times hazardous, was eminently so at that tempestuous equinoctial season. They had reason to fear they would be blown off to the West Indies and without a sufficient stock of provisions. They were also going to a barren country. To add to their difficulties, this dangerous voyage when completed was directly so much out of their way. Their business lay to the southward and they were going northward. Under all these difficulties, and with all these gloomy prospects, the fleet steered for Halifax.

Contrary to appearances, the voyage thither was both short and prosperous. They remained there for some time waiting for reinforcements and instructions from England. When the royal fleet and army departed from Boston, several ships were left behind for the protection of vessels coming from England, but the American privateers were so alert that they nevertheless made many prizes. Some of the vessels which they captured were laden with arms and warlike stores. Some transports with troops on board were also taken. These had run into the harbor, not knowing that the place was evacuated.

On taking possession of Boston, Washington found the town in a much better condition than he had anticipated. Some of the meaner wooden buildings had been pulled down in order that the materials might be used for fuel. The Old South Church, greatly reverenced by the inhabitants and used for public celebrations as well as for worship, had been converted into a stable for cavalry horses. Some other public buildings had suffered damage; but the houses of the rich had been respected, the furniture and pictures remained in their old places, and scarcely any wanton mischief had been done by the soldiers.

The expulsion of the British from Boston was justly regarded as an event of the utmost importance to the cause of freedom. By relieving New England from the immediate presence of the enemy, it enabled the people of that portion of the country to contribute liberally in men and money to the support of the war in the middle and southern Colonies. It gave Washington the opportunity of meeting the British at the point chosen by them for attack; and it inspirited the patriotic in every part of the country. The promptness with which it had been effected, when the proper time for action arrived, was felt to be

due to the able generalship of Washington; and all were eager to congratulate and honor him. The Massachusetts Council and House of Representatives complimented him in a joint address, in which they expressed their good wishes in the following words: "May you still go on approved by heaven — revered by all good men, and dreaded by those tyrants, who claim their fellow-men as their property."

The following is his reply:

"GENTLEMEN.— I return you my most sincere and hearty thanks for your polite address, and feel myself called upon by every principle of gratitude to acknowledge the honor you have done me in this testimonial of your approbation of my appointment to the exalted station I now fill, and what is more pleasing, of my conduct in discharging its important duties.

"When the councils of the British nation had formed a plan for enslaving America and depriving her sons of the most sacred and invaluable privileges against the clearest remonstrances of the Constitution, of justice, and of truth, and to execute their schemes, had appealed to the sword, I esteemed it my duty to take a part in the contest, and more especially on account of my being called thereto by the unsolicited suffrages of the representatives of a free people, wishing for no other reward than that arising from a conscientious discharge of the important trust, and that my services might contribute to the establishment of freedom and peace upon a permanent foundation, and merit the applause of my countrymen and every virtuous citizen.

"Your acknowledgment of my attention to the civil Constitution of this Colony, whilst acting in the line of my department, also demands my grateful thanks. A re-

gard to every provincial institution, where not incompatible with the common interest, I hold a principle of duty and of policy, and it shall ever form a part of my conduct. Had I not learned this before, the happy experience of the advantages resulting from a friendly intercourse with your honorable body, their ready and willing concurrence to aid and to counsel, whenever called upon in cases of difficulty and emergency, would have taught me the useful lesson.

"That the metropolis of your Colony is now relieved from the cruel and oppressive invasions of those who were sent to erect the standard of lawless domination and to trample on the rights of humanity, and is again open and free for its rightful possessors, must give pleasure to every virtuous and sympathetic heart; and its being effected without blood of our soldiers and fellow-citizens must be ascribed to the interposition of that Providence, which has manifestly appeared in our behalf through the whole of this important struggle, as well as to the measures pursued for bringing about the happy event.

"May that Being, who is powerful to save, and in whose hands is the fate of nations, look down with an eye of tender pity and compassion upon the while of the united Colonies; may he continue to smile upon their counsels and arms, and crown them with success, whilst employed in the cause of virtue and mankind. May this distressed Colony and its capital, and every part of this wide-extended continent, through his Divine favor, be restored to more than former luster and once happy state, and have peace, liberty, and safety secured upon a solid, permanent, and lasting foundation."

Congress unanimously passed a vote of thanks to Washington, appointed a special committee to communicate it to him by letter, prepared by them and signed by the

president, and ordered a gold medal to be struck commemorative of the occasion and in honor of him.

The committee of Congress appointed to prepare the letter of thanks, and a device for the medal, were John Adams, John Jay, and Stephen Hopkins. Mr. Adams describes the circumstances that led to the appointment of this committee in a private letter to Washington. "I congratulate you," he writes, "as well as all the friends of mankind, on the reduction of Boston; an event which appeared to me of so great and decisive importance, that the next morning after the arrival of the news, I did myself the honor to move for the thanks of Congress to your excellency, and that a medal of gold should be struck in commemoration of it. Congress have been pleased to appoint me, with two other gentlemen, to prepare a device. I should be very happy to have your excellency's sentiments concerning a proper one. I have the honor to be, with very great respect, sir, your most obedient and affectionate servant."

The official letter from the Congress was in these words:

"*To General Washington.*

"PHILADELPHIA, *April* 2, 1776.

"SIR.— It gives me the most sensible pleasure to convey to you, by order of Congress, the only tribute which a free people will ever consent to pay, the tribute of thanks and gratitude to their friends and benefactors. The disinterested and patriotic principles which led you to the field have also led you to glory; and it affords no little consolation to your countrymen to reflect that as a peculiar greatness of mind induced you to decline any compensation for serving them, except the pleasure of promoting their happiness, they may, without your permis-

LADY ACKLAND'S VISIT TO THE CAMP OF GENERAL GATES.

sion, bestow upon you the largest share of their affections and esteem.

"Those pages in the annals of America will record your title to a conspicuous place in the temple of fame, which shall inform posterity that under your direction an undisciplined band of husbandmen, in the course of a few months, became soldiers; and that the desolation meditated against the country by a brave army of veterans, commanded by the most experienced generals, but employed by bad men in the worst of causes, was by the fortitude of your troops, and the address of their officers, next to the kind interposition of Providence, confined for near a year within such narrow limits, as scarcely to admit more room than was necessary for the encampments and fortifications they lately abandoned. Accept therefore, sir, the thanks of the united Colonies, unanimously declared by their delegates to be due to you and the brave officers and troops under your command; and be pleased to communicate to them this distinguished mark of the approbation of their country. The Congress have ordered a golden medal adapted to the occasion to be struck, and when finished to be presented to you.

"I have the honor to be, with every sentiment of esteem, sir, your most obedient and very humble servant,

"JOHN HANCOCK, *President.*"

Washington's reply was as follows:

"*To the President of Congress,*

"NEW YORK, *April* 18, 1776.

"SIR.— Permit me, through you, to convey to the honorable Congress the sentiments of gratitude I feel for the high honor they have done me in the public mark of

approbation contained in your favor of the 2d inst., which came to hand last night. I beg you to assure them that it will ever be my highest ambition to approve myself a faithful servant of the public; and that to be in any degree instrumental in procuring to my American brethren a restitution of their just rights and privileges will constitute my chief happiness.

"Agreeably to your request, I have communicated in general orders, to the officers and soldiers under my command, the thanks of Congress for their good behavior in the service; and I am happy in having such an opportunity of doing justice to their merit. They were indeed at first '*a band of undisciplined husbandmen;*' but it is, under God, to their bravery and attention to their duty that I am indebted for that success, which has procured me the only reward I wish to receive, the affection and esteem of my countrymen. The medal intended to be presented to me by your honorable body, I shall carefully preserve as a memorial of their regard. I beg leave to return you, sir, my warmest thanks for the polite manner in which you have been pleased to express their sentiments of my conduct; and am, with sincere esteem and respect, sir, your and their most obedient and most humble servant."

It was generally understood when Howe took his departure from Boston, that his immediate destination was Halifax. But Washington suspected that his real design was to go at once to New York. He therefore called for 2,000 militia from Connecticut, and 1,000 from New Jersey, to aid the force already stationed there in defending the city from the expected attack. On the 18th of March, he sent off an additional force of near 6,000, under General Heath, with the same object; and soon after the whole army followed them, except five regiments left under the command of General Ward for the defense of Boston.

General Lee who had previously been in command at New York, and had acted with great decision and efficiency in checking Governor Tryon and the tories, and bringing the force stationed there into a state of discipline, had been appointed by Congress to take charge of the southern department, in order to oppose the attempts of General Clinton in that quarter. To supply his place, General Putnam was appointed to the command of the greatly augmented force now concentrated in New York.

Washington meantime remained in Boston waiting for the actual departure of the British fleet, which had lingered ten days in Nantasket Road before sailing for Halifax. When satisfied that they had left the coast, he departed for New York, where he arrived on the 13th of April.*

* Extracts from Washington's Official Reports of the Expulsion of the British from Boston.

The following extracts from the official letters of Washington to John Hancock, president of Congress, serve to explain the motives of many of his movements directed to the expulsion of the British army from Boston, and afford not only the best commentary on the history narrated in the text, but a lively description of one of the most important and thrilling events of the war.

The following extract is from a letter, dated February 26, 1776:*

"We are making every necessary preparation for taking possession of Dorchester Heights as soon as possible, with a view of drawing the enemy out. How far our expectations may be answered, time only can determine; but I should think, if anything will induce them to hazard an engagement, it will be our attempting to fortify these heights; as, on that event's taking place, we shall be able to command a great part of the town and almost the whole harbor, and to make them rather disagreeable than otherwise, provided we can get a sufficient supply of what we greatly want.

"Within these three or four days I have received sundry accounts

* "Official Letters to the Honorable Congress, written during the war between the united Colonies and Great Britain, by his excellency, George Washington, Commander-in-Chief of the Continental forces, now President of the United States. Copied by special permission from the original papers preserved in the office of the Secretary of State, Philadelphia. London, 1795."

from Boston of such movements there (such as taking the mortars from Bunker's Hill; the putting them, with several pieces of heavy ordnance, on board of ship, with a quantity of bedding; the ships all taking in water; the baking a large quantity of biscuit, etc.) as to indicate an embarkation of the troops from thence. A Mr. Ides, who came out yesterday, says that the inhabitants of the town generally believe that they are about to remove either to New York or Virginia, and that every vessel in the harbor, on Tuesday last, was taken up for government's service, and two months' pay advanced them. Whether they really intend to embark, or whether the whole is a feint, is impossible for me to tell. However I have thought it expedient to send an express to General Lee, to inform him of it (in order that he may not be taken by surprise, if their destination should be against New York), and continued him on to you. If they do embark, I think the possessing themselves of that place and of the North river is the object they have in view, thereby securing the communication with Canada, and rendering the intercourse between the northern and southern united Colonies exceedingly precarious and difficult. To prevent them from effecting their plan is a matter of the highest importance, and will require a large and respectable army and the most vigilant and judicious exertions.

"I shall be as attentive to the enemy's motions as I can and obtain all the intelligence in my power; and, if I find them embark, shall, in the most expeditious manner, detach a part of the light troops to New York, and repair thither myself if circumstances shall require it. I shall be better able to judge what to do when the matter happens. At present I can only say that I will do everything that shall appear proper and necessary."

In the next letter to Hancock, March 7, 1776, he says:

"On the 26th ultimo I had the honor of addressing you and then mentioned that we were making preparations for taking possession of Dorchester Heights. I now beg leave to inform you that a council of general officers having determined a previous bombardment and cannonade expedient and proper, in order to harass the enemy and divert their attention from that quarter, on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday nights last, we carried them on from our posts at Cobble Hill, Leehmere's Point, and Lamb's Dam. Whether they did the enemy any considerable, and what, injury, I have not yet heard, but have the pleasure to acquaint you

that they greatly facilitated our schemes, and would have been attended with success equal to our most sanguine expectations had it not been for the unlucky bursting of two thirteen and three ten-inch mortars, among which was the brass one taken in the ordnance brig. To what cause to attribute this misfortune I know not; whether to any defect in them, or to the inexperience of the bombardiers.

"But to return; on Monday evening, as soon as our firing commenced, a considerable detachment of our men, under the command of Brigadier-General Thomas, crossed the neck and took possession of the two hills without the least interruption or annoyance from the enemy; and by their great activity and industry, before the morning, advanced the works so far as to be secure against their shot. They are now going on with such expedition that in a little time I hope they will be complete and enable our troops stationed there to make a vigorous and obstinate stand. During the whole cannonade, which was incessant the two last nights, we were fortunate enough to lose but two men; one, a lieutenant, by a cannon-ball taking off his thigh; the other, a private, by the explosion of a shell, which also slightly wounded four or five more.

"Our taking possession of Dorchester Heights is only preparatory to taking post on Nook's Hill and the points opposite to the south end of Boston. It was absolutely necessary that they should be previously fortified in order to cover and command them. As soon as the works on the former are finished, measures will be immediately adopted for securing the latter and making them as strong and defensible as we can. Their contiguity to the enemy will make them of much importance and of great service to us. As mortars are essential and indispensably necessary for carrying on our operations and for the prosecution of our plans, I have applied to two furnaces to have some thirteen-inch ones cast with all expedition imaginable, and am encouraged to hope, from the accounts I have had, that they will be able to do it. When they are done and a proper supply of powder obtained, I flatter myself, from the posts we have just taken and are about to take, that it will be in our power to force the ministerial troops to an attack, or to dispose of them in some way that will be of advantage to us. I think from these posts they will be so galled and annoyed that they must either give us battle or quit their present possessions.

I am resolved that nothing on my part shall be wanting to effect the one or the other.

"It having been the general opinion that the enemy would attempt to dislodge our people from the heights and force their works as soon as they were discovered, which probably might have brought on a general engagement, it was thought advisable that the honorable council should be applied to to order in the militia from the neighboring and adjacent towns. I wrote to them on the subject, which they most readily complied with; and, in justice to the militia, I cannot but inform you that they came in at the appointed time and manifested the greatest alerness and determined resolution to act like men engaged in the cause of freedom.

"When the enemy first discovered our works in the morning, they seemed to be in great confusion and, from their movements, to intend an attack. It is much to be wished that it had been made. The event, I think, must have been fortunate, and nothing less than success and victory on our side, as our officers and men appeared impatient for the appeal and to possess the most animated sentiments and determined resolution. On Tuesday evening a considerable number of their troops embarked on board of their transports and fell down to the castle, where part of them landed before dark. One or two of the vessels got aground and were fired at by our people with a field piece, but without any damage. What was the design of this embarkation and landing, I have not been able to learn. It would seem as if they meant an attack; for it is most probable that, if they make one on our works at Dorchester at this time, they will first go to the castle and come from thence. If such was their design, a violent storm that night, which lasted till 8 o'clock the next day, rendered the execution of it impracticable. It carried one or two of their vessels ashore, which they have since got off.

"In case the ministerial troops had made an attempt to dislodge our men from Dorchester Heights, and the number detached upon the occasion had been so great as to have afforded a probability of a successful attack being made upon Boston, on a signal given from Roxbury for that purpose, agreeably to a settled and concerted plan, 4,000 chosen men, who were held in readiness, were to have embarked at the mouth of Cambridge river in two divisions, the first under the command of Brigadier-General Sullivan, the second under Brigadier-General Greene — the whole to have

been commanded by Major-General Putnam. The first division was to land at the powder-house and gain possession of Beacon Hill and Mount Horam; the second, at Barton's Point, or a little south of it, and, after securing that post, to join the other division and force the enemy's gates and works at the Neck, for letting in the Roxbury troops. Three floating batteries were to have preceded and gone in front of the other boats and kept up a heavy fire on that part of the town where our men were to land.

"How far our views would have succeeded had an opportunity offered for attempting the execution, it is impossible for me to say. Nothing less than an experiment could determine with precision. The plan was thought to be well digested; and, as far as I could judge from the cheerfulness and alacrity which distinguished the officers and men who were to engage in the enterprise, I had reason to hope for a favorable and happy issue."

On the next day but one (March 9th), Washington's narrative to President Hancock proceeds as follows:

"Yesterday evening, a Captain Irvine, who escaped from Boston the night before with six of his crew, came to headquarters and gave the following intelligence: 'That our bombardment and cannonade caused a great deal of surprise and alarm in town; that the cannon shot for the greatest part went through the houses; that early on Tuesday morning, Admiral Shuldham, discovering the works our people were throwing up on Dorchester Heights, immediately sent an express to General Howe, to inform him that it was necessary they should be attacked and dislodged from thence, or he would be under the necessity of withdrawing the ships from the harbor, which were under his command; and, from 12 to 2 o'clock, about 3,000 men embarked on board the transports, which fell down to the castle, with a design of landing on that part of Dorchester next to it and attacking our works on the Heights at 5 o'clock next morning; that Lord Percy was appointed to command; that it was generally believed the attempt would be made had it not been for the violent storm which happened that night.'

"He further informs, 'that the army is preparing to leave Boston, and that they will do it in a day or two.'

"The account given by Captain Irvine as to the embarkation and their being about to leave the town, I believe true. There are other circumstances corroborating, and it seems fully confirmed by a paper signed by four of the selectmen of the town (a copy of

which I have the honor to inclose to you), which was brought out yesterday evening by a flag, and delivered to Colonel Learned by Major Bassett, of the Tenth Regiment, who desired it might be delivered to me as soon as possible. I advised with such of the general officers upon the occasion as I could immediately assemble; and we determined it right (as it was not addressed to me, nor to any one else, nor authenticated by the signature of General Howe, or any other act obliging him to a performance of the promise mentioned on his part) that I should give it no answer; at the same time that a letter should be returned, as going from Colonel Learned, signifying his having laid it before me, with the reasons assigned for not answering it. A copy of this is sent.

"To-night I shall have a battery thrown up on Nook's Hill, Dorchester Point, with a design of acting as circumstances may require, it being judged advisable to prosecute our plans of fortification as we intended before this information from the selectmen came. It being agreed on all hands that there is no possibility of stopping them in case they determine to go, I shall order lookouts to be kept upon all the headlands to discover their movements and course, and moreover direct Commodore Manly and his little squadron to dog them, as well for the same purpose as for picking up any of their vessels that may chance to depart from their convoy. From their loading with such precipitancy, it is presumable they will not be in the best condition for sea.

"If the ministerial troops evacuate the town and leave it standing, I have thoughts of taking measures for fortifying the entrance into the harbor, if it shall be thought proper, and the situation of affairs will admit of it. Notwithstanding the report from Boston that Halifax is the place of their destination, I have no doubt but that they are going to the southward, and, I apprehend, to New York. Many reasons lead to this opinion. It is in some measure corroborated by their sending an express ship there, which, on Wednesday week, got on shore and bilged at Cape Cod. The dispatches, if written, were destroyed when she was boarded. She had a parcel of coal and about 4,000 cannon shot, six carriage guns, a swivel or two, and three barrels of powder.

"I shall hold the riflemen and other parts of our troops in readiness to march at a moment's warning, and govern my movements by the events that happen, or such orders as I may receive from

Congress, which I beg may be ample and forwarded with all possible expedition."

Ten days after this letter (March 19, 1776), he announces to Hancock the closing of this grand drama of the siege of Boston. His narrative of the intervening events is more clear and vivid than that of any of the historians of the time:

"It is with the greatest pleasure," he says, "I inform you that, on Sunday last, the 17th inst., about 9 o'clock in the forenoon, the ministerial army evacuated the town of Boston, and that the forces of the united Colonies are now in actual possession thereof. I beg leave to congratulate you, sir, and the Honorable Congress, on this happy event, and particularly as it was effected without endangering the lives and property of the remaining unhappy inhabitants.

"I have great reason to imagine their flight was precipitated by the appearance of a work which I had ordered to be thrown up last Saturday night, on an eminence at Dorchester, which lay nearest to Boston Neck, called Nook's Hill. The town, although it has suffered greatly, is not in so bad a state as I expected to find it; and I have a particular pleasure in being able to inform you, sir, that your house has received no damage worth mentioning.* Your furniture is in tolerable order, and the family pictures are all left entire and untouched. Captain Cazneau takes charge of the whole until he shall receive further orders from you. As soon as the ministerial troops had quitted the town, I ordered a thousand men (who had had the smallpox), under command of General Putnam, to take possession of the Heights, which I shall endeavor to fortify in such a manner as to prevent their return, should they attempt it. But as they are still in the harbor, I thought it not prudent to march off with the main body of the army, until I should be fully satisfied they had quitted the coast. I have therefore only detached five regiments, besides the rifle battalion, to New York, and shall keep the remainder here till all suspicion of their return ceases.

"The situation in which I found their works evidently discovered that their retreat was made with the greatest precipitation. They have left their barracks and other works of wood at Bunker's

* Mr. Hancock's house was still standing, one of the finest monuments of the olden time in Boston, until, nearly a hundred years after, it had to give way to a more modern building.

Hill, etc., all standing, and have destroyed but a small part of their lines. They have also left a number of fine pieces of cannon, which they first spiked up, also a very large iron mortar; and, as I am informed, they have thrown another over the end of your wharf. I have employed proper persons to drill the cannon, and doubt not I shall save the most of them. I am not yet able to procure an exact list of all the stores they have left. As soon as it can be done, I shall take care to transmit it to you. From an estimate of what the quartermaster-general has already discovered, the amount will be twenty-five or thirty thousand pounds."

CHAPTER VI.

WASHINGTON IN NEW YORK.

1776.

WHILE Washington was engaged in conducting the siege of Boston, many events had transpired both in America and England, to which it now becomes necessary to advert.

Notwithstanding the extent to which hostilities had been carried, a large portion of the colonists had hitherto continued to entertain some hope of an amicable termination of the dispute; and it is evident from the transactions we are about to record, that many felt sincerely desirous to frustrate such a result, particularly the leading statesmen of New England and Virginia. The want of more regular and stable governments had for some time been felt in those Colonies where royal governments had hitherto existed; and in the autumn of 1775, New Hampshire had applied to Congress for their advice and direction on this subject.

In November, Congress advised the convention of that Colony to call a full and free representation of the people, when the representatives, if they thought it necessary, should establish such a form of government as, in their judgment, would best promote the happiness of the people and most effectually secure peace and good order during the continuance of the dispute between Great Britain and the Colonies.

On this question the members of Congress were not

unanimous. It was viewed by some as a step necessarily leading to independence; and by some of its advocates it was probably intended as such. To render the resolution less exceptionable, the duration of the government was limited to the continuance of the dispute with the parent country. Soon afterward similar directions and advice were given to South Carolina and Virginia.

The last hopes of the Colonies for reconciliation rested on the success of their second petition to the King; and the answer of their sovereign to this application was expected with extreme solicitude. Information however was soon received from Mr. Penn, who was intrusted with the petition, that no answer would be given.

This intelligence was followed by that of great additional preparations to subdue the "American rebels." The King, in his speech at the opening of Parliament in October (1775), not only accused the colonists of revolt, hostility, and rebellion, but stated that the rebellion which was carried on by them was for the purpose of establishing an independent empire. To prevent this, he declared that the most decisive and vigorous measures were necessary; that he had consequently increased his naval establishment, had augmented his land forces, and had also taken measures to procure the aid of foreign troops. He, at the same time, stated his intention of appointing certain persons with authority to grant pardons to individuals, and to receive the submission of whole Colonies disposed to return to their allegiance.

Large majorities in both Houses assured the King of their firm support in his measure for reducing the colonists to obedience. The addresses however in answer to the speech were opposed with great ability. The project of employing foreign troops to destroy American subjects was reprobated by the minority in the strongest

terms. The plans of the ministry however were not only approved by Parliament, but by a majority of the nation. The idea of making the colonists share their burdens could not easily be relinquished by the people of Great Britain; and national pride would not permit them to yield the point of supremacy. War was now therefore to be waged against the Colonies, and a force sent out sufficiently powerful to compel submission, even without a struggle.

For these purposes the aid of Parliament was requisite, and about the end of December (1775) an act was passed prohibiting all trade and commerce with the Colonies, and authorizing the capture and condemnation, not only of all American vessels, with their cargoes, but all other vessels found trading in any port or place in the Colonies, as if the same were the vessels and effects of open enemies; and the vessels and property thus taken were vested in the captors. An additional clause of the act provided that the crews were to be compelled to serve in the King's ships. This was impressment of the worst possible kind.

The passing of this act shut the door against the application of the Colonies for a reconciliation. The last petition of Congress to the King had indeed been laid before Parliament, but both Houses refused to hear it, or even to treat upon any proposition coming from such an unlawful assembly, or from those who were then in arms against their lawful sovereign.

In the House of Lords, on the motion of the Duke of Richmond, Mr. Penn was examined on American affairs. He stated, among other things, that the colonists were desirous of reconciliation, and did not aim at independence; that they were disposed to conform to the acts regulating their trade, but not to taxation; and that on this point a spirit of resistance was universal.

After this examination the Duke of Richmond moved a

resolution declaring that the petition of Congress to the King was a ground for a reconciliation of the differences between the two countries. This motion was negatived, after a warm debate, by 86 to 33. These proceedings of the King and Parliament, with the employment of 16,000 foreign mercenaries, convinced the leading men in each Colony that the sword alone must decide the contest, and that the colonists must now declare themselves totally independent of Great Britain.

Time however was still requisite to convince the great mass of the American people of the necessity of a complete separation from their parent country, and the establishment of an independent government. The ablest pens were employed throughout America in the winter of 1775–76 on this momentous subject.

The propriety and necessity of the measure was enforced in the numerous gazettes and in pamphlets. Among the latter, "Common Sense," from the pen of Thomas Paine, produced a wonderful effect in the different Colonies in favor of independence. Influential individuals in every Colony urged it as a step absolutely necessary to preserve the rights and liberties as well as to secure the happiness and prosperity of the people.

When the Prohibitory Act reached America, Congress, justly viewing it as a declaration of war, directed reprisals to be made, both by public and private armed vessels, against the ships and goods of the inhabitants of Great Britain found on the high seas or between high and low-water mark. They also burst the shackles of commercial monopoly, which had so long kept them in bondage, and opened their ports to all the world, except the dominions of Great Britain.

In this state of things it was preposterous for the colonists any longer to consider themselves as holding or

exercising the powers of government under the authority of Great Britain. Congress therefore, on the 10th of May (1776), recommended to the assemblies and conventions of the Colonies, where no sufficient government had been established, "to adopt such government as should, in the opinion of the representatives of the people, best conduce to the happiness and safety of their constituents in particular and America in general."

They also declared it necessary that the exercise of every kind of authority under the Crown should be suppressed, and that all the powers of government should be exercised "under the authority of the people of the Colonies, for the preservation of internal peace, virtue, and good order, as well as for the defense of their lives, liberties, and properties, against the hostile invasions and cruel depredations of their enemies." This was a preliminary step to a general declaration of independence.

Some of the colonial assemblies and conventions about the same time began to express their opinions on this great question. On the 22d of April (1776), the convention of North Carolina empowered their delegates in Congress "to concur with those in the other Colonies in declaring independency." This, it is believed, was the first direct public act of any colonial assembly or convention in favor of the measure. The convention of Virginia soon afterward expressed itself still more decidedly. After full deliberation the following resolutions were passed unanimously:

"That the delegates appointed to represent this Colony in General Congress be instructed to propose to that respectable body to declare the united Colonies free and independent States, absolved from all allegiance to or dependence upon the Crown or Parliament of Great Britain; and that they give the assent of this Colony to such decla-

ration and to whatever measures may be thought proper and necessary by the Congress for forming foreign alliances and a confederation of the Colonies, at such time and in the manner as to them shall seem best. Provided, that the power of forming governments for and the regulations of the internal concerns of each Colony be left to the respective colonial Legislatures.

"That a committee be appointed to prepare a declaration of rights and to form such a plan of government as will be most likely to maintain peace and order in this Colony and secure substantial and equal liberty to the people."

Washington's opinion respecting this resolution is thus expressed in a letter to his brother: "I am very glad to find that the Virginia Convention have passed so noble a vote and with so much unanimity. Things have come to such a pass now as to convince us that we have nothing more to expect from the justice of Great Britain; also that she is capable of the most delusive arts; for I am satisfied that no commissioners were ever designed, except Hessians and other foreigners, and that the idea was only to deceive and throw us off our guard. The first has been too effectually accomplished, as many members of Congress, in short, the representation of whole provinces, are still feeding themselves upon the dainty food of reconciliation; and, though they will not allow that the expectation of it has any influence upon their judgment with respect to their preparations for defense, it is but too obvious that it has an operation upon every part of their conduct, and is a clog to their proceedings. It is not in the nature of things to be otherwise, for no man that entertains a hope of seeing this dispute speedily and equitably adjusted by commissioners will go to the same expense and run the same hazards to prepare for the worst event as he who believes that he must conquer or submit to unconditional

terms and the concomitants, such as confiscation, hanging, and the like."

The letter was written in May (1776), when Washington's visit to Congress, to which we shall presently refer, had enabled him to study the disposition of the members; and when the question of independence was the subject of discussion in all circles of public men.

Early in the year (1776) the British Government had prepared a considerable expedition to reduce the southern Colonies to obedience. The command was intrusted to Sir Peter Parker and Earl Cornwallis. On the 3d of May Admiral Parker, with twenty sail, arrived at Cape Fear. They found General Clinton ready to co-operate with them. He had left New York and proceeded to Virginia, where he had an interview with Lord Dunmore; but finding nothing could be effected in that Colony, he repaired to Cape Fear to await the arrival of the armament from England. Meanwhile the Carolinians had been making great exertions.

In Charleston the utmost energy and activity were evinced. The citizens pulled down the valuable storehouses on the wharfs, barricaded the streets, and constructed lines of defense along the shore. Abandoning their commercial pursuits, they engaged in incessant labor and prepared for bloody conflicts. The troops, amounting to between 5,000 and 6,000 men, were stationed in the most advantageous positions. Amidst all this bustle and preparation, lead was so extremely scarce that the windows of Charleston were stripped of their weights in order to procure a small supply of that necessary article for bullets.

Early in June the armament, consisting of between forty and fifty vessels, appeared off Charleston bay, and thirty-six of the transports passed the bar and anchored about

three miles from Sullivan's Island. Some hundreds of the troops landed on Long Island, which lies on the west of Sullivan's Island and which is separated from it by a narrow channel often fordable.

On the 10th of the month the Bristol, a fifty-gun ship, having taken out her guns, got safely over the bar; and on the 25th the Experiment, a ship of equal force, arrived and next day passed in the same way. On the part of the British everything was now ready for action. Sir Henry Clinton had nearly 3,000 men under his command. The naval force, under Sir Peter Parker, consisted of the Bristol and Experiment of fifty guns; the Active, Acteon, Solebay, and Syren frigates; the Friendship of twenty-two, and the Sphinx of twenty, guns; the Ranger sloop and Thunder bomb.

On the forenoon of the 28th of June this fleet advanced against the fort on Sullivan's Island, which was defended by Colonel Moultrie with about 350 regular troops and some militia. The Thunder bomb began the battle. The Active, Bristol, Experiment, and Solebay followed boldly to the attack and a terrible cannonade ensued. The fort returned the fire of the ships slowly, but with deliberate and deadly aim, and the contest was carried on during the whole day with unabating fury.

The Sphinx, Acteon, and Syren were ordered to attack the western extremity of the fort, which was in a very unfinished state; but as they proceeded for that purpose they got entangled with a shoal called the Middle Ground. Two of them ran foul of each other; the Acteon stuck fast; the Sphinx and Syren got off; but fortunately for the Americans that part of the attack completely failed. It was designed that Sir Henry Clinton, with his corps, should co-operate with the naval operations by passing the narrow channel which separates Long Island from Sullivan's

Island and assail the fort by land, but this the General found impracticable, for the channel, though commonly fordable, was at that time, by a long prevalence of easterly winds, deeper than usual; and even had the channel been fordable the British troops would have found the passage an arduous enterprise, for Colonel Thomson, with a strong detachment of riflemen, regulars, and militia, was posted on the east end of Sullivan's Island to oppose any attack made in that quarter.

The engagement, which began about 11 o'clock in the forenoon, continued with unabated fury till 7 in the evening, when the fire slackened, and about 9 entirely ceased on both sides. During the night all the ships except the Acteon, which was aground, removed about two miles from the island.

Next morning the fort fired a few shots at the Acteon and she at first returned them, but in a short time her crew set her on fire and abandoned her. She blew up shortly afterward. In this obstinate engagement both parties fought with great gallantry. The loss of the British was very considerable, upward of 60 being killed and 160 being wounded, whilst the garrison lost only 10 men killed and 22 wounded.

Although the Americans were raw troops, yet they behaved with the steady intrepidity of veterans. One circumstance may serve to illustrate the cool but enthusiastic courage which pervaded their ranks. In the course of the engagement the flagstaff of the fort was shot away, but Sergeant Jasper leaped down upon the beach, snatched up the flag, fastened it to a sponge-staff, and while the ships were incessantly directing their broadsides upon the fort, he mounted the merlon and deliberately replaced the flag.

The fate of this expedition contributed greatly to establish the popular government it was intended to destroy,

while the news of it spread rapidly through the continent and exercised an equally unfavorable influence on the royal cause; the advocates of the irresistibility of British fleets and armies were mortified and silenced, and the brave defense of Fort Moultrie saved the Southern States from the horrors of war for several years.

In South Carolina the government took advantage of the hour of success to conciliate their opponents in the province. The adherents of royal power, who, for a considerable time, had been closely imprisoned, on promising fidelity to their country, were set at liberty and restored to all the privileges of citizens. The repulse of the British was also attended with another advantage, that of leaving the Americans at liberty to turn their undivided force against the Indians, who had attacked the western frontier of the Southern States with all the fury and carnage of savage warfare.

In 1775, when the breach between Great Britain and her Colonies was daily becoming wider, one Stuart, the agent employed in conducting the intercourse between the British authorities and the Cherokees and Creeks, used all his influence to attach the Indians to the royal cause, and to inspire them with jealousy and hatred of the Americans. He found little difficulty in persuading them that the Americans, without provocation, had taken up arms against Britain and were the means of preventing them from receiving their yearly supplies of arms, ammunition, and clothing from the British Government.

The Americans had endeavored to conciliate the goodwill of the Indians, but their scanty presents were unsatisfactory and the savages resolved to take up the hatchet. Deeming the appearance of the British fleet in Charleston bay a fit opportunity, the Cherokees invaded the western

frontier of the province, marking their track with murder and devastation.

The speedy retreat of the British left the savages exposed to the vengeance of the Americans, who, in separate divisions, entered their country at different points, from Virginia and Georgia, defeated their warriors, burned their villages, laid waste their cornfields, and incapacitated the Cherokees for a considerable time from giving the settlers further annoyance. Thus, in the south, the Americans triumphed over the British and Indians.

We have seen that before leaving Boston Washington ordered General Putnam to take command of the army in New York. He was directed to fortify the city and the passes of the Hudson, according to the plans of General Lee, his predecessor in the command. Putnam, aware of the number of Tories in the city, established strict regulations for preserving order, and sternly interdicting the free intercourse which had hitherto prevailed between the inhabitants and the British ships in the neighboring water, in one of which the royal ex-governor Tryon was engaged in carrying a variety of plots and hostile intrigues by means of emissaries to his numerous adherents in the city and Colony.

On his arrival at New York, April 13 (1776), Washington found that the indefatigable Putnam had exerted his usual energy and ability in completing the fortifications, which had been commenced under the direction of General Lee. Those on Brooklyn Heights commanded the city, and, as the possession of them would probably be the first object of General Howe on his arrival, Washington placed them under the command of General Greene, of whose superior ability, courage, and prudence he had already become aware.

Washington found the whole force in New York and its

neighborhood to consist of little more than 10,000 men; and these were distributed in various posts in the city, Long Island, Staten Island, and elsewhere. Many of the soldiers were new recruits without arms, and others were sick or absent on furlough, thus reducing the available force to between 8,000 and 9,000 Of these, considerable detachments upon request from Congress were sent off to Canada, where the ill-fated expedition of which we have already given the history was not yet brought to a close. Ten regiments were taken from the army at New York, in two detachments, for this purpose. The measure was justified to Washington's mind by the consideration that the portion of the army already engaged in Canada could only be reinforced from New York, while those under his immediate command could receive support, if necessary, by calling in the militia from the surrounding country.

In May (1776), Washington, at the request of Congress, paid a visit to Philadelphia for the purpose of devising measures for the prosecution of the ensuing compaign. During the fifteen days that his visit lasted General Putnam held the command at New York. Mrs. Washington, who had accompanied him to New York and had since resided there, was with him also during this visit to Philadelphia. They were invited by President Hancock to be his guests during their stay. In a letter from that place to his brother, John Augustine, already quoted, he says: "We expect a very bloody summer at New York and Canada, as it is there, I presume, the grand efforts of the enemy will be aimed; and I am sorry to say that we are not, either in men or arms, prepared for it. However it is to be hoped that, if our cause is just, as I do most religiously believe it to be, the same Providence which has in many instances appeared for us will still go on to afford its aid."

There is every reason to believe that this reliance on Providence was the constant habit of Washington's mind. It would seem that nothing else could have sustained him under the tremendous responsibilitise and emergencies to which he was subject. It is equally clear that relying on Providence under his severe trials never induced him to relax his energy or vigilance. The circumstances in which he was placed at the time when the letter above quoted was written were sufficiently appalling to have deterred any one who had not deliberately placed his whole trust in Providence, for he had already, as the letter shows, divined the real purpose of the British, which was to land an overwhelming force at New York, to take that place, pass up the Hudson river, and meet another powerful army already dispatched to relieve the British forces in Canada, thus dividing the country into two parts, so that it might be easily conquered in detail. There was every human probability of the success of this plan, and Washington knew it. Yet he was not moved for an instant from that serene calmness which was his habitual state of mind. Truly he was a man who put his trust in God.

In his conferences with Congress Washington expressed the opinion that no acceptable terms would be offered by the British, and that a long war must ensue, which would require more men and better regulations. Congress accordingly ordered enlistments for the regular army to be made for three years' service, with a bounty of $10 to each soldier, and made provision for reinforcements of militia and the building of gondolas and five rafts for the defense of New York harbor.

They also determined on a plan to reinforce the army, by bringing into the field a new species of troops that would be more permanent than the common militia and yet more easily raised than regulars. With this view they

instituted a flying camp, to consist of an intermediate corps, between regular soldiers and militia. Ten thousand men were called for from the States of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Delaware, to be in constant service to the first day of the ensuing December. Congress at the same time called for 13,800 of the common militia from Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey. The men for forming the flying camp were generally procured, but there were great deficiencies of the militia, and many of those who obeyed their country's call so far as to turn out manifested a reluctance to submit to the necessary discipline of camps.

The difficulty of providing the troops with arms while before Boston was exceeded by the superior difficulty of supplying them in their new position. By the returns of the garrison at Fort Montgomery, in the Highlands, in April, it appeared that there were 208 privates and only forty-one guns fit for us. In the garrison at Fort Constitution there were 136 men and only sixty-eight guns fit for use. Flints were also much wanted. Lead would have been equally deficient had not a supply for the musketry been obtained by stripping dwelling-houses.*

The measures necessary to remedy these deficiencies formed a subject of consultation between Washington and Congress, as well as the establishment of a permanent board of war and ordnance, composed of John Adams, Colonel Benjamin Harrison, Roger Sherman, Edward Rutledge, and James Wilson, who were henceforth to act instead of the various military committees of Congress, who had hitherto had charge of military affairs.

On Washington's return to New York he resumed preparations for receiving the enemy, who were daily ex-

* "One house," says Gordon, "supplied them with 1,200 pounds and another with 1,000 pounds."

pected to arrive with a fleet and a powerful army. He was also under the necessity of attending to the various operations of the Tories, who infested the province of New York to a fearful extent.

Mr. Sparks gives an account of the plots of these Tories, Governor Tryon being the mainspring of all their movements. Washington, after a great deal of urgency, got Congress to appoint a secret committee to take up and examine suspected persons. It is true that this was a dangerous responsibility to be placed in the hands of any man, but the necessity of the case demanded some action. The Tories were bound to take one side or the other in the questions at issue; open enmity could be met, but they who wished to be considered neutrals while they covertly aided and gave intelligence to the enemy could not be suffered to remain in a position which gave them every advantage over the patriots and their cause. The power of apprehending the Tories had wisely been put into the hands of the civil authority of each Colony, and the conventions, assemblies, and committees were authorized to employ, when they thought it necessary for the purpose, a militia force from the Continental army. "Many Tories were apprehended in New York and on Long Island; some were imprisoned; others disarmed. A deep plot, originating with Governor Tryon, was defeated by a timely and fortunate discovery. His agents were found enlisting men in the American camp and enticing them with rewards. The infection spread to a considerable extent and even reached the General's guard, some of whom enlisted. A soldier of the guard was proved guilty by a court-martial and executed. It was a part of the plot to seize General Washington and convey him to the enemy."*

The rumors of these proceedings were spread through

* Sparks, "Life of Washington," p. 169.

the country and occasioned no small degree of indignation and alarm. Indeed the danger to the cause of freedom by the machinations of the Tories was real and imminent.

In this crisis of particular danger the people of New York acted with spirit. Though they knew they were to receive the first impression of the British army, yet their convention resolved: "That all persons residing within the State of New York and claiming protection from its laws owed it allegiance, and that any person owing it allegiance and levying war against the State, or being an adherent to the King of Great Britain, should be deemed guilty of treason and suffer death." They also resolved: "That one-fourth of the militia of Westchester, Dutchess, and Orange counties should be forthwith drawn out for the defense of the liberties, property, wives, and children of the good people of the State, to be continued in service till the last day of December," and "that as the inhabitants of King's county had determined not to oppose the enemy, a committee should be appointed to inquire into the authenticity of these reports, and to disarm and secure the disaffected, to remove or destroy the stock of grain, and if necessary to lay the whole country waste."

The fleet and army daily expected to arrive when Washington returned from Philadelphia were formidable, even had he been at the head of a numerous and well-appointed army.

The command of the force which was designed to operate against New York was given to Admiral Lord Howe, and his brother, Sir William,* officers who, as well from their personal characters as the known bravery of their family, stood high in the confidence of the British

* Sir William Howe was the same officer who had held the command in Boston after Gage's recall.

Nation. To this service was allotted a very powerful army, consisting of about 30,000 men. This force was far superior to anything that America had heretofore seen. The troops were amply provided with artillery, military stores, and warlike materials of every kind, and were supported by a numerous fleet. The Admiral and General, in addition to their military powers, were appointed commissioners for restoring peace to the Colonies.

General Howe, having in vain waited two months at Halifax for his brother and the expected reinforcements from England, impatient of further delays, sailed from that harbor with the force which he had previously commanded in Boston, and directing his course toward New York arrived in the latter end of June (1776) off Sandy Hook. Admiral Lord Howe, with part of the reinforcement from England, arrived at Halifax soon after his brother's departure. Without dropping anchor he followed, but did not arrive at Staten Island till about the middle of July. The British General, on his approach, found every part of New York island and the most exposed parts of Long Island fortified and well defended by artillery.

About fifty British transports anchored near Staten Island, which had not been so much the object of Washington's attention. The inhabitants of the island, either from fear, policy, or affection expressed great joy on the arrival of the royal forces. General Howe was there met by Tryon and by several of the loyalists, who had taken refuge with him in an armed vessel. He was also joined by about sixty persons from New Jersey, and 200 of the inhabitants of Staten Island were embodied as a royal militia. From these appearances great hopes were indulged that as soon as the army was in a condition to penetrate into the country and protect the loyalists such

numbers would flock to their standard as would facilitate the attainment of the objects of the campaign.

Washington, knowing that the force already arrived — forty ships, with between 9,000 and 10,000 troops — was only the vanguard of the still greater force expected to arrive under Admiral Lord Howe, took immediate steps to strengthen his army. He called on Congress for a reinforcement from Massachusetts, to consist of five regiments of regular soldiers, whose place should be supplied in Boston by calling in militia, and for the formation of a flying camp to be stationed in New Jersey, ready to act on any emergency.

On the 2d of July (1776) he issued one of those general orders with which he was accustomed to address the army in lieu of what the French call a "military allocution." In it he called upon the soldiers to prepare for the coming contest, on which their liberty and safety depended; promised rewards to the brave and patriotic, and threatened punishment to those who should refuse or neglect to do their duty.*

The contest was indeed approaching, and at this very moment Congress was preparing to throw down the gauntlet of defiance in good earnest. We have already noticed the spirited action of the Virginia Assembly, with Washington's own commentary on it. Since that action Congress had received from a majority of the Colonies which it represented either urgent entreaties or deliberate consent and authority to the dissolution of all further political connection with Great Britain.

* These general orders are characteristic of Washington's modesty and aversion to display. Napoleon and Jackson, on similar occasions, had recourse to a speech. Of course it is impossible for a numerous army to hear a speech, so the paper is published and distributed as the General's speech.

The New Hampshire spirit had found expression before the middle of June, 1776, in the following document:

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE BY NEW HAMPSHIRE IN 1776.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, JUNE 11, 1776.

"*Voted*, That Samuel Curtis, Timothy Walker, and John Dudley, Esquires, be a committee of this House to join a committee of the Honorable Board, to make a draft of a Declaration of this General Assembly for INDEPENDENCE of the united colonies on Great Britain.

"JUNE 15, 1776.

"The committee of both houses, appointed to prepare a draft setting forth the sentiments and opinion of the Council and Assembly of this colony relative to the united colonies setting up an independent State, make report as on file — which report being read and considered,

"*Voted unanimously*, That the report of said committee be received and accepted, and that the draft by them brought in be sent to our delegates at the Continental Congress forthwith as the sense of the House.

"The draft made by the committee of both houses, relating to independency, and voted as the sense of this House, is as follows, viz.:

"Whereas it now appears an undoubted fact, that notwithstanding all the dutiful petitions and decent remonstrances from the American colonies, and the utmost exertions of their best friends in England on their behalf, the British ministry, arbitrary and vindictive, are yet determined to reduce by fire and sword our bleeding country to their absolute obedience; and, for this purpose, in addition to their own forces, have engaged great numbers of foreign mercenaries, who may now be on their passage

here, accompanied by a formidable fleet to ravish and plunder the sea-coast; from all which we may reasonably expect the most dismal scenes of distress the ensuing year, unless we exert ourselves by every means and precaution possible; and whereas we of this colony of New Hampshire, have the example of several of the most respectable of our sister colonies before us for entering upon that most important step of disunion from Great Britain, and declaring ourselves free and independent of the crown thereof, being impelled thereto by the most violent and injurious treatment; and it appearing absolutely necessary in this most critical juncture of our public affairs, that the Honorable the Continental Congress, who have this important object under immediate consideration, should be also informed of our resolutions thereon without loss of time;— we do hereby declare, that it is the opinion of this Assembly that our delegates at the Continental Congress should be instructed, and they are hereby instructed, to join with the other colonies in declaring the thirteen united colonies a free and independent state,— solemnly pledging our faith and honor, that we will on our parts support the measure with our lives and fortunes,— and that in consequence thereof they, the Continental Congress, on whose wisdom, fidelity, and integrity we rely, may enter into and form such alliances as they may judge most conducive to the present safety and future advantage of these American colonies; *provided*, the regulation of our internal police be under the direction of our own Assembly.

"Entered according to the original.

"*Attest*, NOAH EMERY, *Clr. D. Reps.*"

Connecticut, under Governor Jonathan Trumbull, was in the very front of unhesitating, energetic, and effective

patriotism. As early as 1769 Trumbull had been chosen Governor, and he was the only colonial Governor who espoused the popular cause in the struggle of the Colonies against the Crown. He had, in 1768, refused to take the oath required of officers of the Crown, and from that moment he stood conspicuous as a foremost leader of colonial aspiration for liberty. To Washington, when he came to New England to conduct from Cambridge the operations initiated at Bunker Hill, Trumbull was for counsel and conduct a chief dependence. On one early occasion, at a council of war, amid great uncertainties as to preparation to meet an expected British attack, Washington said: "We must consult Brother Jonathan." It grew to be a common expression among the officers, and gave origin to the use of "Brother Jonathan" to signify the personified country, the typical America. In the days that tried men's souls, Gov. Jonathan Trumbull was in the van of courage and confidence, so much so that he got out a Declaration of Independence earlier than that issued by the Continental Congress. This instrument, which has not become immortal, but deserves to be so, was in the form of a proclamation issued by Gov. Jonathan Trumbull, "with the advice of the Council and at the desire of the Representatives in General Court assembled," on June 18, 1776, sixteen days before the better-known Declaration of Philadelphia was adopted. Governor Trumbull's paper so nearly covered the ground taken by the Philadelphia instrument that when the latter arrived in Hartford, on July 12th, the Governor and Council declined to publish it for the reason that it would be supererogatory; and the Declaration of Independence, for this reason, never was published in Connecticut. Dr. Charles J. Hoadley, State Librarian of Connecticut, in his fifteenth and last volume of the "Colonial

Records of Connecticut," recently issued, publishes the paper entire from a contemporary broadside.* It is as follows:

"*By the Honorable*

"JONATHAN TRUMBULL Esq

"Governor and Commander-in-chief of the English Colony of Connecticut in New England.

"A PROCLAMATION

"The Race of Mankind was made in a State of Innocence and Freedom subjected only to the Laws of God the Creator, and through his rich Goodness, designed for virtuous liberty and Happiness, here and for ever; and when moral Evil was introduced into the World, and Man had corrupted his Ways before God, Vice and Iniquity came in like a Flood and Mankind became exposed, and a prey to the Violence, Injustice and Oppression of one another. God in great Mercy inclined his People to form themselves into Society, and to set up and establish civil Government for the Protection and security of their Lives and Properties from the Invasion of wicked men. But through Pride and ambition the Kings and Princes of the World appointed by the People the Guardians of their Lives and Liberties, early and almost universally degenerated into Tyrants, and by Fraud or Force betrayed and wrested out of their hands the very Rights and Properties they were appointed to protect and defend. But a small part of the Human Race maintained and enjoyed any tolerable Degree of Freedom. Among those happy few, the nation of Great Britain was distinguished by a Constitution of Government wisely framed and modelled to support

* New York "Evening Post," July 4, 1890.

the Dignity and Power of the Prince, for the protection of the Rights of the People, and under which that Country in long succession enjoyed great Tranquillity and Peace, though not unattended with repeated and powerful efforts, by many of its haughty Kings, to destroy the Constitutional Rights of the People, and establish arbitrary Power and Dominion. In one of those convulsive struggles our Forefathers, having suffered in that their native Country great and variety of Injustice and Oppression, left their dear Connections and Enjoyments, and fled to this then inhospitable land to secure a lasting retreat from civil and religious Tyranny.

"The God of Heaven favored and prospered this Undertaking — made room for their settlement — increased and multiplied them to a very numerous People and inclined succeeding Kings to indulge them and their children for many years the unmolested Enjoyment of the Freedom and Liberty they fled to inherit. But an unnatural King has risen up — violated his sacred Obligations and by the Advice of Evil Counsellors attempted to wrest from us, their children the Sacred Rights we justly claim and which have been ratified and established by solemn Compact with, and recognized by his Predecessors and Fathers, Kings of *Great Britain* — laid upon us Burdens too heavy and grievous to be borne and issued many cruel and oppressive Edicts, depriving us of our natural, lawful, and most important Rights, and subjecting us to the absolute Power and Controul of himself and the *British* Legislature; against which we have sought Relief, by humble, earnest and dutiful Complaints and Petitions: But, instead of obtaining Redress our Petitions have been treated with Scorn and Contempt, and fresh Injuries heaped upon us while hostile armies and ships are sent to lay waste our Country. In this distressing Dilemma, having no Alternative but abso-

lute Slavery or successful Resistance, this, and the United American Colonies have been constrained by the overruling laws of Self Preservation to take up Arms for the Defence of all that is sacred and dear to Freemen, and make this solemn Appeal to Heaven for the Justice of their Cause, and resist Force by Force.

"God Almighty has been pleased of his infinite Mercy to succeed our Attempts, and give us many Instances of signal Success and Deliverance. But the wrath of the King is still increasing, and not content with before employing all the Force which can be sent from his own Kingdom to execute his cruel Purposes, has procured, and is sending all the Mercenaries he can obtain from foreign countries to assist in extirpating the Rights of *America*, and with theirs almost all the liberty remaining among Mankind.

"In this most critical and alarming situation, this and all the Colonies are called upon and earnestly pressed by the Honorable Congress of the *American* Colonies united for mutual defence, to raise a large additional number of their militia and able men to be furnished and equipped with all possible Expedition for defence against the soon expected attack and invasion of those who are our Enemies without a Cause. In cheerful compliance with which request and urged by Motives the most cogent and important that can affect the human Mind, the General Assembly of this Colony have freely and unanimously agreed and resolved, that upwards of Seven Thousand able and effective Men be immediately raised, furnished and equipped for the great and interesting Purposes aforesaid. And not desirous that any should go to a warfare at their own charges (though equally interested with others) for defence of the great and all-important Cause in which we are engaged, have granted large and liberal Pay and Encourage-

ments to all who shall voluntarily undertake for the Defence of themselves and their country as by their acts may appear, I do *therefore* by and with the advice of the Counsel, and at the desire of the Representatives in General Court assembled, issue this PROCLAMATION, and make the solemn Appeal to the Virtue and public Spirit of the good People of this Colony. Affairs are hastening fast to a Crisis, and the approaching Campaign will in all Probability determine forever the fate of AMERICA. If this should be successful on our side, there is little to fear on account of any other. Be exhorted to rise therefore to superior exertions on this great Occasion, and let all that are able and necessary show themselves ready in Behalf of their injured and oppressed Country, and come forth to the help of the Lord against the Mighty, and convince the unrelenting Tyrant of *Britain* that they are resolved to be *Free.* Let them step forth to defend their Wives, their little Ones, their Liberty, and everything they hold sacred and dear, to defend the Cause of their Country, their Religion, and their God. Let every one to the utmost of their Power lend a helping Hand, to promote and forward a design on which the salvation of *America* now evidently depends. Nor need any be dismayed: the Cause is certainly a just and a glorious one: God is able to save us in such way manner as he pleases and to humble our proud Oppressors. The Cause is that of Truth and Justice; he has already shown his Power in our Behalf, and for the Destruction of many of our Enemies. *Our Fathers trusted in him and were delivered.* Let us all repent and thoroughly amend our Ways and turn to him, put all our Trust and Confidence in him — in his Name go forth, and in his Name set up our Banners, and he will save us with temporal and eternal salvation. And while our Armies are abroad jeoparding their lives in the high Places of the

Field,* let all who remain at Home, cry mightily to God for the Protection of his Providence to shield and defend their lives from Death, and to crown them with victory and success. And in the Name of the said General Assembly I do hereby earnestly recommend it to all, both Ministers and People frequently to meet together for social prayer to Almighty God for the outpouring of his blessed Spirit upon this guilty land — That he would awaken his People to Righteousness and Repentance, bless our Councils, prosper our Arms and succeed the Measures using for our necessary self defence — disappoint the evil and cruel Devices of our Enemies — preserve our precious Rights and Liberties, lengthen out our Tranquility, and make us a People of his Praise, and the blessed of the Lord, as long as the Sun and Moon shall endure.

"And all the Ministers of the Gospel in this Colony, are directed and desired, to publish this Proclamation in their several churches and congregations, and to enforce the Exhortations thereof, by their own pious Example and public instructions.

"*Given under my Hand at the Council Chamber in Hartford, the* 18*th day of June Anno Domini* 1776.

"JONATHAN TRUMBULL."

One or two of the provincial assemblies yet refrained from giving any explicit directions on this subject to their representatives; the directions from Maryland were latterly unfavorable to an immediate assertion of independ-

* The use of these words is very striking, seeing that in Governor Trumbull's own State the monument now standing, opposite New London, in honor of the victims of the massacre of Groton Heights, bears most appropriately the entire verse (Judges v., 18). "Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that jeoparded their lives into the death in the high places of the field."

ence, and those from Pennsylvania and Delaware were flatly opposed to it.

But the leading partisans of independence perceived that the season had arrived when this great design must be either openly espoused or definitively abandoned; they remarked that, in general, the main objections that were still urged against it applied rather to the time than to the measure itself, and they were convinced that in every one of the States the majority of the people, however credulous or desirous of a reconciliation with Britain, would rather repudiate such views than retain them in opposition to the declared and general policy of America.

On the 7th of June (1776), accordingly, it was formally proposed in Congress by Richard Henry Lee of Virginia that the American States should be declared free and independent. This proposition induced long and animated debates, and afforded scope to the largest display of wisdom, genius, and eloquence in the discussion of a question than which none more interesting to human liberty and happiness was ever before submitted to the decision of a national assembly.

The American Congress, in its original composition, exhibiting the citizens of a subordinate commonwealth in the act of assuming into their own hands the reins of government which a superior state had previously wielded over them, presented a spectacle of deep and stirring interest to human nature and civilized society. Deliberating now if the grand conception which it had suggested was to be despondingly abandoned or resolutely fulfilled, it addressed the universal sentiments of mankind with extended interest and augmented dignity. While European sovereigns were insulting and violating every sanction and safeguard of national right and human liberty by the infamous partition of Poland, a revolutionary principle of

nobler nature and vindictive destiny was developed to the earnest and wondering eyes of the world in America.

A very ordinary degree of knowledge and reflection may enable any person to suggest to himself the principal arguments which must have been employed in the conduct of this solemn and important debate; but no authentic report of the actual discussion has been transmitted. John Adams, who supported the project of independence, and Dickinson, who opposed it, were acknowledged to have pre-eminently distinguished themselves by their rhetoric and ingenuity.

Adams, it is said, forcibly maintained that a restoration of union and harmony between Britain and America was impossible; that military conquest alone could restore the British ascendency; and that an open declaration of independence was imperatively required to harmonize the views of the Americans, to elevate and confirm their spirits in an inevitable conflict, and to enable them to obtain effectual succor from foreign powers. Prudence and justice alike demanded that the brave men who had taken arms in defense of their country's freedom should be enabled to dismiss the apprehension of fighting for a hollow and precarious reconciliation and a return to the yoke of dependence.

Dickinson is said to have insisted (and very plausibly, it must be allowed) that an instant dissolution of the American confederacy would be produced by the mere act of Great Britain in withdrawing her fleets and armies at the present juncture; but in maintaining, as he is also reported to have done, that the same breach of federal union, aggravated by an effervescence of popular spirit incompatible with civil order, must ensue from the withdrawment of the British troops at a later period, and after a prolonged contest and the excitation of furious passion

in every part of America, he disregarded the continued influence of that bond of union whose initial operation he was so strongly impressed with, and undervalued the wisdom and virtue which his countrymen were capable of exerting for the extinction of the flames of revolutionary passions.

Some members of the Congress opposed a declaration of independence as unwarrantable or premature; and others, for awhile, were reluctantly deterred from supporting it by the instructions of their constituents. After the discussion had been protracted for nearly a month, during which interval the hesitation or opposition of a minority of the States was overborne, as had been foreseen, by the general current of national will — the measure proposed by Lee was approved and embraced by a vote almost unanimous (July 2, 1776); and a document, entitled "Declaration of the Independence of the Thirteen United States of North America," composed by Thomas Jefferson, was subscribed (July 4, 1776) by all the members who were anxious to confront the danger and accomplish the glory of their country.

On July 1st, with probably fifty members present, the delegates from New York having explained why their formal concurrence could not be then given, nine Colonies voted for the resolution in committee of the whole, Pennsylvania's vote failing by four negative to three affirmative; Delaware's by one to one, only two being present, and South Carolina going wholly negative. On the report to the House from the committee of the whole, made by Harrison, action by the House was put off to the next day at the request of South Carolina, presented by Rutledge. July 2d, by the staying away of two who had voted nay for Pennsylvania, and the arrival of a third Delaware member to vote aye, and the conclusion of South Carolina to

come round, twelve Colonies — New York still unable to vote, though not opposed to the result — went upon the record for the passage of the resolution, "That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved."

On that 1st of July, 1776, when Congress went into committee of the whole "to take into consideration the resolution respecting independency," — Harrison of Virginia, in the chair — and John Adams had made "his sudden, impetuous, unpremeditated speech," on "the justice, the necessity, the seasonableness, and the advantages of a separation from Great Britain," the reply of Dickinson of Pennsylvania, justly comprehended the effect of the Declaration in saying that: "A Sovereignty composed of several distinct bodies of men, not subject to established Constitutions and not combined together by confirmed articles of union, is such a sovereignty as has ever appeared."*

John Adams wrote at the end of this great day of decision: "When I look back to 1761, and run through the series of political events, the chain of causes and effects, I am surprised at the suddenness as well as greatness of this revolution. Britain has been filled with folly and America with wisdom. It is the will of heaven that the two countries should be sundered forever; it may be the will of heaven that America shall suffer calamities still more lasting and distresses yet more dreadful. The 2d day of July, 1776, will be the most memorable epocha in the history of America; to be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival, commemo-

* Bancroft, IV, p. 437.

rated as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty, from one end of the continent to the other, from this time forward forever more."

On July 4th no one signed except Hancock as President of Congress and Thompson (who was not a delegate) as secretary. Inasmuch as of the States that voted in favor only a bare majority of their delegates were in favor; New York and Maryland were restricted from voting in favor, and Deleware and Pennsylvania were divided, it was thought best to adjourn at once and report to the several Colonies. Upon reassembling July 15th it was found that all present were in favor of the Declaration. The vote to engross on parchment and have all sign passed on the 19th of July. The New York restrictions had been recalled July 9th, giving thirteen New York votes. It was in the resolution of July 19th, declaring "The unanimous declaration of the thirteen United States of America in Congress assembled," that the words "United States of America" were first used. The actual final signing of the engrossed declaration, which had been voted July 2d, and signed for official attestion July 4th, took place August 2d.

"The Declaration," says Bancroft,* "was not only the announcement of the birth of a people, but the establishment of a national government; a most imperfect one, it is true, but still a government, in conformity with the limited constitutional powers which each Colony had conferred upon its delegates in Congress. * * * The management of the internal police and government was carefully reserved to the separate States, which could, each for itself, enter upon the career of domestic reforms. But the States were not independent one of another; the United States of America, presenting themselves to man-

* IV, p. 452.

kind as one people, assumed powers over war, peace, foreign alliances, and commerce."

And Frothingham's "Rise of the Republic" specially notes how the Declaration assumed what the Constitution of 1787 finally secured, a Nation in place of Confederate Colonies. Thus he says:* "The sentiment of nationality — the fresh emotion of country — was inspiration and it was strength. They had a right to resist as distinct communities. But they did not choose this course. They strove so persistently to unite in general measures of resistance, that for ten years union was the key to their politics. It grew to be a conviction that a common country was a necessity; and when they came to act on the large scale of assuming national powers, they declared their independence by a joint act. Hence they became one nation. The Declaration established Union as a fundamental law by the side of the old law of diversity. The Declaration transformed the sentiment of nationality into the fact of nationality. The Declaration announced to the world the fact of The United States of America, a new political sovereignty. The Declaration changed the allegiance of the individual from the monarchy to the United States."

No one rejoiced more cordially at the news of the Declaration of Independence than Washington. He had long desired it. He had long been hampered, almost paralyzed, in his military operations by the anomalous condition in which he was placed as the Commander-in-Chief of an army acting against a sovereign whose allegiance had not been openly renounced. His action would now be more free, his position completely defined. He was henceforth to fight for a free and independent country.

On the 9th of July, the Declaration by Washington's

* pp. 553–557.

order was read at the head of each brigade of the army, and was received by the soldiers with joyous acclamations. In the general order of the day he said: "The General hopes that this important event will serve as a fresh incentive to every officer and soldier, to act with fidelity and courage, as knowing that now the peace and safety of his country depend, under God, solely on the success of our arms; and that he is now in the service of a State possessed of sufficient power to reward his merit, and advance him to the highest honors of a free country."

On the evening of the same day, a number of the people of New York, in order to complete the celebration by a significant token, pulled down a leaden statue of George III, which had been erected on the Bowling Green in 1770, and broke it to pieces. The lead of which it was composed was subsequently cast into bullets, "to be used in the cause of independence."

Three days after these proceedings, the city was thrown into great alarm (July 12, 1776). Two ships from the British fleet, the Phœnix, of forty guns, and the Rose, of twenty, with three tenders, taking advantage of a favorable breeze sailed up the bay, and were proceeding up the Hudson river. They were fired upon by the batteries of the city and those on the opposite Jersey shore at Paulus Hook, and answered with broadsides. They passed the forts with little injury, as the men on deck were protected by ramparts of sandbags; while the cannonade spread terror among the quiet people of the city, who were apprehensive of a general attack.

The ships went up the Hudson to the Tappan sea and Haverstraw bay, where the breadth of the river enabled them to anchor without being molested by the firing from the shore.

Washington apprehending an attack on Forts Constitu-

tion and Montgomery, lately erected on the Hudson river, sent off expresses to General Mifflin, who commanded the former, and to the New York convention, then in session at White Plains, apprising them of the danger. Gen. George Clinton was then in command of the militia of Orange and Ulster counties. To him Washington sent off another dispatch, urging him to collect a force for the protection of the Highlands, a request which that active officer had already more than anticipated by sending reinforcements to Fort Montgomery, Fort Constitution, and the Highlands.

The ships remained in the river for a period of five weeks, taking soundings, observing the positions on the shores, and communicating secretly with the Tories, notwithstanding the vigilance of the garrisons and armed parties on shore, by whom their motions were watched. Their real object was to make observations with a view to certain future objects of General Howe, which were to cut off communication by water between Washington's army and Canada, and between the city and country, as well as to communicate with the Tories and encourage them in measures of hostility. Before their return to the fleet, one of the tenders was destroyed by a fire-shop, under command of Captain Thomas, which with others, had been sent up the river by Washington.*

Meantime (July 12, 1776), Lord Howe arrived at Staten Island and joined his brother with a powerful fleet and army. Immediately after his arrival he sent ashore a flag of truce to Amboy, with a circular letter, together with a declaration to several of the late royal Governors, presuming them to be still in power, acquainting them with his authority as commissioner from the King, and the terms proposed for reconciliation, and desiring them to

* Sparks, "Life of Washington," p. 170.

publish the same as generally as possible for the information of the people. The declaration and letters were intercepted and forwarded to Congress by General Washington; and ordered by them to be published in the several newspapers, that the inhabitants might be informed of the terms offered by Lord Howe, which were merely offers of pardon and favor to individuals, or whole Colonies, who would return to their allegiance and assist in "*restoring tranquillity*," that is, desert the cause of their country, and give aid and comfort to its enemies. Congress was perfectly willing to make known, as widely as possible these terms, with the expectation of which the court of Britain had endeavored to amuse and disarm them; and that the few who were still suspended by a hope founded either in the justice or moderation of the British Government might be convinced that the valor alone of their country was to save its liberties.

There is no reason to doubt that Lord Howe was sincerely anxious for peace. He addressed a note to Dr. Franklin, to whom he was personally well known, earnestly expressing his wishes that the differences between the Americans and the mother country might be amicably settled. Franklin in his reply courteously regretted that he had crossed the Atlantic on an errand so fruitless, as to expect to obtain submission from his countrymen. "It is impossible," he writes, "that we should think of submission to a government that has, with the most wanton barbarity and cruelty, burnt our defenseless towns in the midst of winter; excited the savages to massacre our peaceful farmers, and our slaves to murder their masters; and is now bringing foreign mercenaries to deluge our settlements with blood. Long did I endeavor, with unfeigned and unwearied zeal, to persevere from breaking that fine and noble china vase, the British empire; for I

knew that being once broken, the separate parts could not retain even their share of the strength and value that existed in the whole; and that a perfect reunion could scarce ever be hoped for." In conclusion he says, "I know your great motive in coming hither was the hope of being instrumental in a reconciliation; and I believe when you find that to be impossible on any terms given you to propose, you will then relinquish so odious a command and return to a more honorable private station."

Failing in these efforts, the commissioners next attempted to open a communication with Washington, whom they addressed as *George Washington, Esq.;* but as they were not prepared to acknowledge the official position and station of the Commander-in-Chief, a difficulty at once arose. Washington never suffered the slightest deviation from exact propriety in all his public relations. The commissioners, anxious to accomplish something, next had recourse to an expedient by which they hoped to obviate all difficulty; they changed the address of their letter for the superscription following: *To George Washington, etc., etc.* Adjutant-General Patterson was sent with this dispatch. Being introduced to Washington, he gave him in conversation the title of *Excellency.* The General received him with great politeness, but at the same time with much dignity. The adjutant expressed himself greatly concerned, on behalf of his principals, on account of the difficulties that had arisen about the superscription of the letter, assured him of their high regard for his personal character, and that they had no intention to undervalue his rank. It was hoped therefore that the *et ceteras*, being in use between ambassadors, when they were not perfectly agreed upon points of etiquette, would remove all obstructions to their mutual intercourse.

Washington answered that a letter written to a person

invested with a public character should specify it, otherwise it could not be distinguished from a private letter; that it was true the *et ceteras* implied everything; but it was no less true that they implied anything; and that as to himself, he would never consent to receive any letter, relating to public affairs, that should be directed to him, without a designation of his rank and office. Patterson requested that this question might be waived; and turned the conversation upon prisoners of war. He expatiated in magnificent terms upon the goodness and clemency of the King, who had chosen for negotiators Lord and General Howe. He affirmed that their desire to terminate the differences which had arisen between the two peoples was as earnest as their powers were ample; and that he hoped the General would consider this visit as the first step toward it. Washington replied that he was not authorized to negotiate; but that it did not appear that the powers of the commissioners consisted in any more than in granting pardons; that America, not having committed any offense, asked for no forgiveness, and was only defending her unquestionable rights. Patterson remarked that this subject would open too vast a field of discussion. He expressed his acknowledgments for the favor done him, in omitting the usual ceremony of blinding his eyes when passing the Americans' works. Washington invited him to partake of a collation, and he was introduced to the general officers. After many compliments and polite expressions, and repeating his regrets that a strict observation of formalities should interrupt the course of so important an affair, he took leave of Washington and withdrew. This conference thus remained without result and all thoughts were again turned toward hostilities. Congress were perfectly aware, on the one hand, of the shame they must incur by departing from the resolution so

recently taken of asserting independence, and they feared on the other that the propositions of England might contain some secret poison. They caused an exact relation to be printed of the interview between the Commander-in-Chief and the English Adjutant-General.

At this time of imminent danger, Washington had the grief and mortification to learn that dissensions were breaking out among the different portions of the army, which threatened the most serious consequences. The officers, coming from various parts of the country, were jealous of each other, and openly expressed themselves in terms so disrespectful as necessarily to produce a very bad state of feeling toward each other, which spread also among the soldiers to such an extent as to excite an apprehension of actual collision between the different corps. Washington foreseeing all the evils which would inevitably result from such a state of things had recourse to persuasion and reprimand. In a general order he thus addressed the army:

"The General most earnestly entreats the officers and soldiers to consider the consequences; that they can no way assist our enemies more effectually than by making divisions among ourselves; that the honor and success of the army, and the safety of our bleeding country, depend upon harmony and good agreement with each other; that the provinces are all united to oppose the common enemy, and all distinctions sunk in the name of an American. To make this name honorable and to preserve the liberty of our country ought to be our only emulation; and he will be the best soldier and the best patriot, who contributes most to this glorious work, whatsoever his station, or from whatever part of the continent he may come. Let all distinctions of nations, countries, and provinces be lost in the generous contest, who shall behave with the most

BATTLE OF SARATOGA — GENERAL ARNOLD WOUNDED IN THE ATTACK ON THE HESSIAN REDOUBT.

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courage against the enemy, and the most kindness and good humor to each other. If there be any officers or soldiers so lost to virtue and a love of their country as to continue in these practices after this order, the General assures them and is authorized by Congress to declare to the whole army that such persons shall be severely punished and dismissed from the service with disgrace."

This order produced a marked effect from the habitual reverence ever felt for Washington by the army. But the evil was never wholly eradicated. Throughout the war it was deemed important to keep the troops from each State together, and place them under the command of general officers from their own part of the country.

The reinforcements to the British army, of whom about 450 had been captured by the Americans cruisers, were now arriving daily from Europe; and General Howe had also been joined by the troops from Charleston. His strength was now estimated at 24,000 men.

To this army, alike formidable for its numbers, its discipline, and its equipments, aided in its operations by a numerous fleet, and conducted by commanders of skill and experience, Washington had to oppose a force unstable in its nature, incapable from its structure of receiving discipline, and inferior to its enemy in numbers, in arms, and in every military equipment. It consisted, when General Howe landed on Staten Island, of 10,000 men, who were much enfeebled by sickness. The diseases which always afflict new troops were increased by exposure to the rain and night air without tents. In consequence of Washington's earnest representations to Congress, some regiments stationed in the different States were ordered to join him; and in addition to the requisitions of men to serve until December — requisitions not yet complied with — the neighboring militia were called into service for the

exigency of the moment. Yet in a letter written to Congress on the 8th of August (1776), he stated that "for the several posts on New York, Long and Governor's Islands, and Paulus Hook, the army consisted of only 17,225 men, of whom 3,668 were sick; and that to repel an immediate attack, he could count certainly on no other addition to his numbers than a battalion from Maryland, under the command of Colonel Smallwood."*

The army was rendered the more inadequate to its objects by being necessarily divided for the defense of posts, some of which were fifteen miles distant from others, with navigable waters between them. "These things," continued the letter, "are melancholy, but they are nevertheless true. I hope for better. Under every disadvantage my utmost exertions shall be employed to bring about the great end we have in view; and so far as I can judge from the professions and apparent dispositions of my troops, I shall have their support. The superiority of the enemy and the expected attack do not seem to have depressed their spirits. These considerations lead me to think that though the appeal may not terminate so happily as I could wish, yet the enemy will not succeed in their views without considerable loss. Any advantage they may gain I trust will cost them dear."

Soon after this letter the army was reinforced by Smallwood's regiment and by two regiments from Pennsylvania, with a body of New England and New York militia, which

* Most of the Continental troops were without uniforms. In the Connecticut regiments the officers were distinguished from the men only by wearing cockades in their hats. But the battalion from Maryland under Colonel Smallwood, composed of young men from rich families, wore an elegant uniform of scarlet and bluff, which contrasted strongly with the homespun apparel of many of the Eastern troops. The army had no cavalry, a deficiency which was severely felt in the battle of Long Island.

increased it to 27,000 men, of whom one-fourth were sick.

A part of the army was stationed on Long Island under the command of Major-General Sullivan, who had been ordered to this point in consequence of the illness of General Greene. The residue occupied different stations on York Island, except two small detachments, one on Governor's Island, and the other at Paulus Hook, and except a part of the New York militia under General Clinton, who were stationed on the Sound, toward New Rochelle, and about East and West Chester, in order to oppose any sudden attempt which might be made to land above Kingsbridge and cut off the communication with the country.

Expecting daily to be attacked, and believing that the influence of the first battle would be extremely important, Washington employed every expedient which might act upon that enthusiastic love of liberty, that indignation against the invaders of their country, and that native courage which were believed to animate the bosoms of his soldiers, and which were relied on as substitutes for discipline and experience. "The time," say his orders issued soon after the arrival of General Howe (August 2, 1776), "is now at hand which must determine whether Americans are to be freemen or slaves; whether they are to have any property they can call their own; whether their houses and farms are to be pillaged and destroyed and themselves consigned to a state of wretchedness from which no human efforts will deliver them. The fate of unborn millions will now depend, under God, on the courage and conduct of this army. Our cruel and unrelenting enemy leaves us only the choice of a brave resistance, or the most abject submission. We have therefore to resolve to conquer or to die. Our own, our country's honor, call upon us for a vigorous and manly exertion, and if we now shamefully fail, we shall become infamous to the whole world. Let

us then rely on the goodness of our cause, and the aid of the Supreme Being, in whose hands the victory is, to animate and encourage us to great and noble actions. The eyes of all our countrymen are now upon us, and we shall have their blessings and praises, if happily we are the instruments of saving them from the tyranny meditated against them. Let us therefore animate and encourage each other and show the whole world that a freeman contending for liberty on his own ground is superior to any slavish mercenary on earth."*

To the officers he recommended coolness in time of action, and to the soldiers strict attention and obedience, with a becoming firmness and spirit.

He assured them that any officer, soldier, or corps, distinguished by any acts of extraordinary bravery, should most certainly meet with notice and rewards, whilst on the other hand those who should fail in the performance of their duty would as certainly be exposed and punished.

Whilst preparations were making for the expected engagement, intelligence was received of the repulse of the British squadron which had attacked Fort Moultrie. Washington availed himself of the occasion of communicating this success to his army to add a spirit of emulation to the other motives which should impel them to manly exertions. "This glorious example of our troops," he said, "under the like circumstances with ourselves, the General hopes, will animate every officer and soldier to imitate and even to outdo them, when the enemy shall make the same attempt on us. With such a bright example before us of what can be done by brave men fighting in

* This general order of Washington has been greatly admired, and frequently published, as a remarkably fine specimen of military eloquence. It is indeed fraught with the eloquence which is brought forth from a strong mind by a great emergency.

defense of their country, we shall be loaded with a double share of shame and infamy if we do not acquit ourselves with courage, and manifest a determined resolution to conquer or die."

As the crisis approached his anxiety increased. Endeavoring to breathe into his army his own spirit, and to give them his own feeling, he thus addressed them: "The enemy's whole reinforcement is now arrived, so that an attack must and will soon be made. The General therefore again repeats his earnest request that every officer and soldier will have his arms and ammunition in good order; keep within his quarters and encampments as far as possible; be ready for action at a moment's call, and when called to it, remember that liberty, property, life, and honor, are all at stake; that upon their courage and conduct rest the hopes of their bleeding and insulted country; that their wives, children, and parents, expect safety from them only; and that we have every reason to believe that heaven will crown with success so just a cause.

"The enemy will endeavor to intimidate by show and appearance; but remember they have been repulsed on various occasions by a few brave Americans; their cause is bad; and if opposed with firmness and coolness on their first onset, with our advantage of works and knowledge of the ground, the victory is most assuredly ours. Every good soldier will be silent and attentive, wait for orders, and reserve his fire until he is sure of doing execution; of this the officers are to be particularly careful."

He directed explicitly that any soldier who should attempt to conceal himself, or retreat without orders, should instantly be shot down; and solemnly promised to notice and reward those who should distinguish themselves. Thus did he, by infusing those sentiments, which would stimulate to the greatest individual exertion, into every

bosom, endeavor to compensate for the want of arms, of discipline, and of numbers.

As the defense of Long Island was intimately connected with that of New York, a brigade had been stationed at Brooklyn, a post capable of being maintained for a considerable time. An extensive camp had been marked out and fortified at the same place. Brooklyn is situated on a small peninsula made by East river, the Bay, and Gowanus bay. The encampment fronted the mainland of the island, and the works stretched quite across the peninsula, from Wallabout bay in the East river on the left, to a deep marsh on a creek emptying into Gowanus bay on the right. The rear was covered and defended against an attack from the ships by strong batteries on Red Hook and on Governor's Island, which in a great measure commanded that part of the bay, and by other batteries on East river, which kept open the communication with York Island. In front of the camp was a range of hills covered with thick woods, which extended from east to west nearly the breadth of the island, and across which were three different roads leading to Brooklyn Ferry. These hills though steep were everywhere passable by infantry.

The movements of General Howe indicating an intention to make his first attack on Long Island, General Sullivan was strongly reinforced. Early in the morning of the 22d of August (1776), the principal part of the British army, under command of General Clinton, landed under cover of the guns of the fleet, and extended from the ferry at the Narrows, through Utrecht and Gravesend, to Flatlands.

Confident that an engagement must soon take place, Washington made still another effort to inspire his troops with the most determined courage. "The enemy," said he

in addressing them, "have now landed on Long Island, and the hour is fast approaching on which the honor and success of this army and the safety of our bleeding country depend. Remember, officers and soldiers, that you are freemen, fighting for the blessings of liberty — that slavery will be your portion and that of your posterity, if you do not acquit yourselves like men." He repeated his instructions respecting their conduct in action, and concluded with the most animating and encouraging exhortations.

Major-General Putnam was now directed to take command at Brooklyn with a reinforcement of six regiments; and he was charged most earnestly by the Commander-in-Chief to be in constant readiness for an attack, and to guard the woods between the two camps with his best troops. This order was obeyed with great alacrity, as the active and indefatigable veteran was heartily tired of his monotonous life in the city.

Washington had passed the day at Brooklyn making arrangements for the approaching action, and at night had returned to New York.

The Hessians, under General De Heister, composed the center of the British army at Flatbush; Major-General Grant commanded the left wing which extended to the coast, and the greater part of the British forces under General Clinton, Earl Percy, and Lord Cornwallis, turned short to the right and approached the opposite coast of Flatlands.

The two armies were now separated from each other by the range of hills already mentioned. The British center at Flatbush was scarcely four miles distant from the American lines at Brooklyn, and a direct road led across the heights from the one to the other. Another road, rather more circuitous than the first, led from Flatbush

by the way of Bedford, a small village on the Brooklyn side of the hills. The right and left wing of the British army were nearly equidistant from the American works, and about five or six miles from them. The road leading from the Narrows along the coast and by the way of Gowanus Cove afforded the most direct route to their left; and their right might either return by the way of Flatbush and unite with the center, or take a more circuitous course and enter a road leading from Jamaica to Bedford. These several roads united between Bedford and Brooklyn, a small distance in front of the American lines.

The direct road from Flatbush to Brooklyn was defended by a fort which the Americans had constructed in the hills, and the coast and Bedford roads were guarded by detachments posted on the hills within view of the British camp. Light parties of volunteers were directed to patrol on the road leading from Jamaica to Bedford, about two miles from which near Flatbush, Colonel Miles of Pennsylvania was stationed with a regiment of riflemen. The convention of New York had directed a small body of militia to be assembled on the high grounds near the enemy, under the command of General Woodhull, for the purpose of interrupting their communication with their numerous friends in that neighborhood; but he was not placed under the orders of the regular officer commanding on the island.

About 9 at night, General Clinton silently drew off the van of the British army across the country, in order to seize a pass in the heights about three miles east of Bedford, on the Jamaica road.* In the morning (August 26,

* The arrangements for guarding against surprise at this point were very incomplete, and the neglect to occupy it with a strong force led to the most disastrous consequences. "Most unfortunately, General Greene was seized with a violent fever about the

1776), about two hours before daybreak, within half a mile of the pass, his patrols fell in with and captured one of the American parties which had been stationed on this road. Learning, to his great surprise, from his prisoners that the pass was unoccupied, General Clinton immediately seized it; and on the appearance of day the whole column passed the heights, and advanced into the level country between them and Brooklyn.

Before Clinton had secured the passes on the road from Jamaica, General Grant advanced along the coast at the head of the left wing with ten pieces of cannon. As his first object was to draw the attention of the Americans from their left, he moved slowly, skirmishing as he advanced with the light parties stationed on that road.

This movement was soon communicated to General Putnam, who reinforced the parties which had been advanced in front; and as General Grant continued to gain ground, still stronger detachments were employed in this service. About 3 in the morning, Brigadier-General Lord Stirling was directed to meet the enemy, with the two nearest regiments, on the road leading from the Narrows. Major-General Sullivan, who commanded all the troops without the lines, advanced at the head of a strong detachment on the road leading directly to Flat-

middle of August, and the command devolved on General Putnam, whose want of thorough knowledge of the ground led to the Jamaica road being left without sufficient protection, and most unhappily afforded the British commander an opportunity of assaulting the Americans in front and rear at the same time. In the confusion and want of discipline which prevailed, the orders to watch and guard the passes were imperfectly obeyed; and, as Washington apprehended, the chances of success were greatly in favor of the enemy." — *Spencer, History of the United States.*

bush, while another detachment occupied the heights between that place and Bedford.

About the break of day (August 27), Lord Stirling reached the summit of the hills, where he was joined by the troops which had been already engaged, and were retiring slowly before the enemy, who almost immediately appeared in sight. A warm cannonade was commenced on both sides, which continued for several hours; and some sharp, but not very close, skirmishing took place between the infantry. Lord Stirling, being anxious only to defend the pass he guarded, could not descend in force from the heights; and General Grant did not wish to drive him from them until that part of the plan, which had been intrusted to Sir Henry Clinton, should be executed.

In the center, General De Heister, soon after daylight, began to cannonade the troops under General Sullivan, but did not move from his ground at Flatbush until the British right had approached the left and rear of the American line. In the meantime, in order the more effectually to draw their attention from the point where the grand attack was intended, the fleet was put in motion, and a heavy cannonade was commenced on the battery at Red Hook.

About half-past 8, the British right having then reached Bedford, in the rear of Sullivan's left, General De Heister ordered Colonel Donop's corps to advance to the attack of the hill, following himself with the center of the army. The approach of Clinton was now discovered by the American left, which immediately endeavored to regain the camp at Brooklyn. While retiring from the woods by regiments, they encountered the front of the British.

About the same time, the Hessians advanced from Flatbush against that part of the detachment which occupied the direct road to Brooklyn. Here General Sullivan com-

manded in person, but he found it difficult to keep his troops together long enough to sustain the first attack. The firing heard toward Bedford had disclosed the alarming fact that the British had turned their left flank, and were getting completely into their rear. Perceiving at once the full danger of their situation, they sought to escape it by regaining the camp with the utmost possible celerity. The sudden rout of this party enabled De Heister to detach a part of his force against those who were engaged near Bedford. In that quarter too the Americans were broken and driven back into the woods; and the front of the column led by General Clinton continuing to move forward intercepted and engaged those who were retreating along the direct road from Flatbush. Thus attacked both in front and rear, and alternately driven by the British on the Hessians and by the Hessians back again on the British, a succession of skirmishes took place in the woods, in the course of which some parts of corps forced their way through the enemy and regained the lines of Brooklyn, and several individuals saved themselves under cover of the woods, but a great proportion of the detachment was killed or taken. The fugitives were pursued up to the American works, and such is represented to have been the ardor of the British soldiers, that it required the authority of their cautious commander to prevent an immediate assault.

The fire toward Brooklyn gave the first intimation to the American right that the enemy had gained the rear. Lord Stirling perceived the danger, and that he could only escape it by retreating instantly across the creek. This movement was immediately directed; and to secure it, his lordship determined to attack in person a British corps under Lord Cornwallis, stationed at a house rather above the place at which he intended to cross the creek.

About 400 men of Smallwood's regiment were drawn out for this purpose, and the attack was made with great spirit. This small corps was brought up several times to the charge, and Lord Stirling stated that he was on the point of dislodging Lord Cornwallis from his post; but the force in his front increasing, and General Grant also advancing on his rear, the brave men he commanded were no longer able to oppose the superior numbers which assailed them on every quarter. Upward of 250 of Smallwood's regiment were killed, and those who survived were, with their general, made prisoners of war. This attempt though unsuccessful gave an opportunity to a large part of the detachment to save themselves by crossing the creek.

The loss sustained by the American army in this battle could not be accurately ascertained by either party. Numbers were supposed to have been drowned in the creek, or suffocated in the marsh, whose bodies were never found; and exact accounts from the militia are seldom to be obtained, as the list of the missing is always swelled by those who return to their homes. Washington did not admit it to exceed a thousand men; but in this estimate he must have included only the regular troops. In a letter written by Howe, the amount of prisoners is stated at 1,097, among whom were Major-General Sullivan, and Brigadiers Lord Stirling and Woodhull, by him named Udell. He computes the loss of the Americans at 3,300 men, but his computation is excessive. The actual loss of the Americans was about 2,000, including the killed, wounded, and prisoners. He supposes too that the troops engaged on the heights amounted to 10,000, but they could not have much exceeded half that number. His own loss is stated at 21 officers, and 346 privates — killed, wounded, and taken.

As the action became warm, Washington passed over to the camp at Brooklyn, where he saw with inexpressible anguish the destruction in which his best troops were involved, and from which it was impossible to extricate them. Should he attempt anything in their favor with the men remaining within the lines, it was probable the camp itself would be lost, and the whole division of his army destroyed. Should he bring over the remaining battalions from New York he would still be inferior in point of numbers, and his whole army, perhaps the fate of his country, might be staked on the issue of a single battle thus inauspiciously commenced. Compelled to behold the carnage of his troops, without being able to assist them, his efforts were directed to the preservation of those which remained.

Believing the Americans to be much stronger than they were in reality, and unwilling to commit anything to hazard, General Howe made no immediate attempt to force their lines. He encamped in front of them, and on the 28th, at night, broke ground in form, within 600 yards of a redoubt on the left.

In this critical state of things a retreat seemed unavoidable; every moment was precious, since a sudden shift of wind, by bringing the British fleet between Brooklyn and New York, would cut off the possibility of escape. It was known besides, that Clinton was threatening to send part of his army across the Sound, thus menacing New York. Washington called a council of war, at which it was resolved to retreat with the troops at once. The hour of 8 in the evening of the 29th of August was fixed upon for the embarkation. Everything had been prepared, and the troops were ready to march down, but the force of the wind and ebb tide delayed them for some hours, and seemed as if it would entirely frustrate the enterprise.

The enemy, toiling hard at the approaches, were now so near that the blows of their pickaxes and instruments could be distinctly heard, while the noise of these operations deadened all sound of the American movements, which were carried on in the deepest silence. About 2 in the morning, a thick fog settling over Long Island prevented all sight of what was going on, and the wind shifting round to the southwest, the soldiers entered the boats and were rapidly transferred to the opposite shore. So complete were the arrangements that almost all the artillery, with the provisions, horses, wagons, and ammunition, safely crossed over to New York. Washington, who for forty-eight hours had hardly been off his horse and never closed his eyes, though repeatedly entreated, refused to enter a boat until all the troops were embarked, and crossed the river in the last boat of all.*

Washington, leaving a considerable force in the city of New York, encamped with the main body on Harlem Heights, at the northern end of the island; he was also prepared to retreat into Westchester county, if need be. The British had entire possession of Long Island; the ships of war anchored within cannon shot of the city; and Howe was gradually making his arrangements to pursue the dispirited and defeated American troops.

It was under no ordinary suffering of mind that Wash-

* The service of managing the boats was performed by Marblehead fishermen. Otherwise the result might have been widely different. "Colonel Glover, who belonged to Marblehead, was called upon with the whole of his regiment fit for duty to take the command of the vessels and flat-bottomed boats. Most of the men were formerly employed in the fishery, and so peculiarly well qualified for the service. The colonel went over himself from New York to give directions; and, about 7 o'clock at night, officers and men went to work with a spirit and resolution peculiar to that corps."—*Gordon's History of the American Revolution.*

ington addressed the President of Congress on the 2d of September (1776): "Our situation is truly distressing. The check our detachment sustained on the 27th ultimo has dispirited too great a proportion of our troops and filled their minds with apprehension and despair. The militia, instead of calling forth their utmost efforts to a brave and manly opposition, in order to repair our losses, are dismayed, intractable, and impatient to return. Great numbers of them have gone off; in some instances almost by whole regiments, by half ones, and by companies at a time. This circumstance of itself, independent of others, when fronted by a well-appointed enemy, superior in number to our whole collected force, would be sufficiently disagreeable; but, when their example has infected another part of the army, when their want of discipline and refusal of almost every kind of restraint and government have produced a like conduct but too common to the whole, and an entire disregard of that order and subordination necessary to the well-doing of an army, and which had been inculcated before as well as the nature of our military establishment would admit of — our condition becomes still more alarming; and, with the deepest concern, I am obliged to confess my want of confidence in the generality of the troops."

This unfortunate state of things induced Washington again to repeat the opinion, which he had so often expressed to Congress, that little reliance could be placed on soldiers enlisted for short periods. The only means of preserving the liberties of the country he considered to be the enlistment of troops to serve during the whole war.

The British commanders did not seem to be in haste to press the advantage they had gained by the battle of Long Island. On the contrary, they considered the present a favorable time for a fresh attempt at pacification. To ac-

complish this object, General Sullivan, who had been taken prisoner on Long Island, was immediately sent on parole, with the following verbal message from Lord Howe to Congress: "That though he could not at present treat with them in that character, yet he was very desirous of having a conference with some of the members, whom he would consider as private gentlemen; that he, with his brother, the General, had full powers to compromise the dispute between Great Britain and America, upon terms advantageous to both; that he wished a compact might be settled, at a time when no decisive blow was struck, and neither party could say it was compelled to enter into such agreement; that were they disposed to treat, many things which they had not yet asked might and ought to be granted, and that if upon conference they found any probable ground of accommodation, the authority of Congress would be afterward acknowledged to render the treaty complete."

Three days after this message was received, General Sullivan was requested to inform Lord Howe "that Congress, being the representatives of the free and independent States of America, cannot with propriety send any of their members to confer with his lordship in their private characters; but that, ever desirous of establishing peace on reasonable terms, they will send a committee of their body to know whether he has any authority to treat with persons authorized by Congress for that purpose, on behalf of America, and what that authority is, and to hear such propositions as he shall think fit to make respecting the same."

They elected Dr. Franklin, John Adams, and Edward Rutledge their committee for this purpose. In a few days they met Lord Howe on Staten Island, and were received with great politeness. On their return they made a re-

port of their conference, which they summed up by saying: "It did not appear to your committee that his lordship's commission contained any other authority than that expressed in the act of Parliament — namely, that of granting pardons, with such exceptions as the commissioners shall think proper to make, and of declaring America, or any part of it, to be in the King's peace on submission; for as to the power of inquiring into the state of America, which his lordship mentioned to us, and of conferring and consulting with any persons the commissioners might think proper, and representing the result of such conversation to the ministry, who, provided the Colonies would subject themselves, might after all, or might not, at their pleasure, make any alterations in the former instructions to governors, or propose in Parliament any amendment of the acts complained of, we apprehended any expectation from the effect of such a power would have been too uncertain and precarious to be relied on by America, had she still continued in her state of dependence."

Lord Howe had ended the conference on his part by expressing his regard for America and the extreme pain he would suffer in being obliged to distress those whom he so much regarded. Dr. Franklin thanked him for his regards, and assured him "that the Americans would show their gratitude by endeavoring to lessen as much as possible all pain he might feel on their account by exerting their utmost abilities in taking good care of themselves."

The committee in every respect maintained the dignity of Congress. Their conduct and sentiments were such as became their character. The friends to independence rejoiced that nothing resulted from this interview that might disunite the people. Congress, trusting to the good sense of their countrymen, ordered the whole to be printed for

their information. All the States would have then rejoiced at less beneficial terms than they obtained about seven years after. But Great Britain counted on the certainty of their absolute conquest or unconditional submission. Her offers therefore comported so little with the feelings of America that they neither caused demur nor disunion among the new-formed States.

While Lord Howe's conciliatory propositions to Congress were under discussion, hostilities advanced slowly; but Tory emissaries were constantly sent into the country to detach as many of the people as possible from the cause of freedom by representing the great danger incurred by attempting to resist the powerful fleet and army which were to carry all before them, and by offers of pardon and reward to all deserters. As in all political disputes, many were hesitating which party to join. The system adopted by the enemy was retaliated.

While the British, by their manifestoes and declarations, were endeavoring to separate those who preferred a reconciliation with Great Britain from those who were friends of independence, Congress, by a similar policy, was attempting to detach the foreigners who had come with the royal troops from the service of His Brittanic Majesty. Before hostilities had commenced the following resolution was adopted and circulated among those on whom it was intended to operate: "Resolved, that these States will receive all such foreigners who shall leave the armies of His Brittanic Majesty in America, and shall choose to become members of any of these States, and they shall be protected in the free exercise of their respective religions, and be invested with the rights, privileges, and immunities of natives, as established by the laws of these States, and moreover that this Congress will provide for every such person fifty acres of unappropriated lands in some of

these States, to be held by him and his heirs as absolute property."

Washington, in a letter to Congress of the 26th of August, refers to these offers. "The papers," he says, "designed for the foreign troops have been put into several channels in order that they might be conveyed to them; and from the information I had yesterday I have reason to believe many have fallen into their hands." Franklin was one of the committee for carrying the resolutions into effect, and one of the expedients adopted was worthy his ingenuity. In a letter to General Gates* he says: "The Congress being advised that there was a probability that the Hessians might be induced to quit the British service by offers of land, they came to two resolves for this purpose, which, being translated into German and printed, are to be sent to Staten Island to be distributed, if practicable, among that people. Some of them have tobacco marks on the back, that so tobacco being put in them in small quantities, as the tobacconists use, and suffered to fall into the hands of these people, they might divide the papers as plunder before their officers could come to the knowledge of the contents and prevent their being read by the men. That was the first resolve. A second has since been made for the officers themselves. I am desired to send some of both sorts to you that, if you find it practicable, you may convey them among the Germans who may come against you."

Our narrative has now brought us near the close of the summer of 1776, a period when the position of Washington was nearly the reverse of what it had been at the same season of the preceding year. Then he was besieging the British in Boston. Now they were endeavoring to entrap him in New York. We shall presently see that his strategy was far superior to theirs.

* Sparks, "Writings of Washington," vol. IV, p. 67.

CHAPTER VII.

WASHINGTON CROSSES THE HUDSON.

1776.

AFTER the disastrous battle of Long Island the situation of Washington in New York was one of the most trying in which he had ever been placed. He was not only embarrassed by doubt as to the enemy's intentions and by the weakness, discontent, and positive misconduct of the army, but by the clamors of that noisy portion of the community called "the public," who were incapable of estimating the difficulties of his position or the motives of his conduct.

Before the British landed it was impossible to tell what place would be first attacked. This made it necessary to erect works for the defense of a variety of places as well as of New York. Though everything was abandoned when the crisis came that either the city must be relinquished or the army risked for its defense, yet, from the delays occasioned by the redoubts and other works, which had been erected on the idea of making the defense of the States a war of posts, a whole campaign was lost to the British and saved to the Americans. The year began with hopes that Great Britain would recede from her demands, and therefore every plan of defense was on a temporary system. The Declaration of Independence, which the violence of Great Britain forced the Colonies to adopt in July, though neither foreseen nor intended at the commencement of the year, pointed out the necessity of or-

ganizing an army, on new terms, corresponding to the enlarged objects for which they had resolved to contend. Congress accordingly determined some time after (September 16, 1776) to raise eighty-eight battalions, to serve during the war. Under these circumstances, to wear away the campaign with as little misfortune as possible, and thereby to gain time for raising a permanent army against the next year, was to the Americans a matter of the last importance. Though Washington abandoned those works, which had engrossed much time and attention, yet the advantage resulting from the delays they occasioned far overbalanced the expense incurred by their erection.

The same short-sighted politicians who had before censured Washington for his cautious conduct in not storming the British lines at Boston renewed their clamors against him for adopting this evacuating and retreating system. Supported by a consciousness of his own integrity and by a full conviction that these measures were best calculated for securing the independence of America, he, for the good of his country, voluntarily subjected his fame to be overshadowed by a temporary cloud. We now return to the events of the tedious and difficult, though, in its results, successful campaign.

The British army, now in full possession of Long Island, was posted from Bedford to Hell Gate, and thus fronted and threatened New York from its extreme southern point to the part opposite the northern boundary of Long Island, a small distance below the Heights of Harlem, comprehending a space of about nine miles.

Immediately after the victory at Brooklyn dispositions were made by the enemy to attack New York, and a part of the fleet sailed round Long Island and appeared in the Sound. Two frigates passed up the East river without receiving any injury from the batteries, and anchored be-

hind a small island, which protected them from the American artillery. At the same time, the main body of the fleet lay at anchor close in with Governor's Island, from which the American troops had been withdrawn, ready to pass up either the North or East rivers, or both, and act against any part of the island.

These movements indicated a disposition not to make an attack directly on New York, as had been expected, but to land near Kingsbridge and take a position which would cut off the communication of the American army with the country.

Aware of the danger of his situation, General Washington began to remove such stores as were not immediately necessary, and called a council of war to decide whether New York should be at once abandoned or longer defended.

Some of the general officers who composed the council were in favor of evacuating the city at once, assigning as reasons the possibility of its being speedily bombarded by the fleet, the distance of the different parts of the army from each other, its extremes being not less than sixteen miles apart, and the advantage to be gained by concentrating the army, preserving the stores and heavy artillery, and depriving the enemy of the advantage of their ships. Putnam and Washington himself held these views. General Greene, detained from the council by sickness, in a letter to Washington, dated September 5th (1776), went still further and recommended the burning of the city, assigning, among other reasons for this proceeding, that two-thirds of the city and suburbs belonged to Tories. Other members of the council were for holding the city till the army was absolutely driven out. General Mifflin, in a letter, assigned as a reason for this opinion that the acquisition of New York would give great *eclat* to the

arms of Great Britain, afford the soldiers good quarters, and furnish a safe harbor for the fleet.*

In his letter, communicating to Congress the result of this council, which was against an immediate evacuation, Washington manifested a conviction of the necessity of that measure, though he yielded to that necessity with reluctance. Speaking of the enemy, he observed:

"It is now extremely obvious from their movements, from our intelligence, and from every other circumstance that, having their whole army upon Long Island, except about 4,000 men who remain on Staten Island, they mean to inclose us in this island by taking post in our rear, while their ships effectually secure the front; and thus, by cutting off our communication with the country, oblige us to fight them on their own terms or surrender at discretion; or, if that shall be deemed more advisable, by a brilliant stroke endeavor to cut this army to pieces and secure the possession of arms and stores which they well know our inability to replace.

"Having their system unfolded to us, it becomes an important consideration how it could be most successfully opposed. On every side there is a choice of difficulties, and experience teaches us that every measure on our part (however painful the reflection) must be taken with some apprehension that all our troops will not do their duty.

"In deliberating upon this great question," he added, "it was impossible to forget that history, our own experience, the advice of our ablest friends in Europe, the fears of the enemy, and even the declarations of Congress demonstrate that on our side the war should be defensive

* It was at this time that Washington called on Colonel Knowlton to find a suitable person to cross to Long Island to learn something of the enemy's intentions and through him obtained the services of Nathan Hale.

(it has ever been called a war of posts); that we should on all occasions, avoid a general action, nor put anything to the risk unless compelled by necessity, into which we ought never to be drawn."

After communicating the decision which had been made by the council of officers, he stated the opinion of those who were in favor of an immediate evacuation with such force as to confirm the belief that it remained his own.

The majority, who overruled this opinion, did not expect to be able to defend the city permanently, but to defer the time of losing it, in the hope of wasting so much of the campaign before General Howe could obtain possession of it as to prevent his undertaking anything further until the following year. They therefore advised a middle course between abandoning the town absolutely and concentrating their whole strength for its defense. This was to form the army into three division, one of which should remain in New York, the second be stationed at Kingsbridge, and the third occupy the intermediate space, so as to support either extreme. The sick were to be immediately removed to Orange in New Jersey. A belief that Congress was inclined to maintain New York at every hazard, and a dread of the unfavorable impression which its evacuation might make on the people, seem to have had great influence in producing the determination to defend the place a short time longer.

This opinion was soon changed. The movements of the British General indicated clearly an intention either to break their line of communication or to inclose the whole army in New York. His dispositions were alike calculated to favor the one or the other of those objects. Washington, who had continued to employ himself assiduously in the removal of the military stores to a place of safety, called a second council to deliberate on the further

defense of the city, which determined, by a large majority, that it had become not only prudent, but absolutely necessary, to withdraw the army from New York.

In consequence of this determination Brigadier-General Mercer, who commanded the flying camp on the Jersey shore, was directed to move up the North river to Fort Lee, the post opposite Fort Washington, and every effort was used to expedite the removal of the stores.

On the morning of the 15th (September, 1776), three ships-of-war proceeded up the North river as high as Bloomingdale, a movement which entirely stopped the further removal of stores by water. About 11 o'clock on the same day Sir Henry Clinton, with a division of 4,000 men, who had embarked at the head of Newtown bay, where they had lain concealed from the view of the troops posted on York Island, proceeded through that bay into the East river, which he crossed; and, under cover of the fire of five men-of-war, landed at a place called Kipp's bay, about three miles above New York.

The works thrown up to oppose a landing at this place were of considerable strength and capable of being defended for some time, but the troops abandoned them without waiting to be attacked and fled with precipitation. On the commencement of the cannonade, General Washington ordered the brigades of Parsons and Fellowes to the support of the troops posted in the lines, and rode toward the scene of action. The panic of those who had fled from the works was communicated to the troops ordered to sustain them, and the Commander-in-Chief had the extreme mortification to meet the whole party retreating in the utmost disorder, totally regardless of the efforts made by their generals to stop their disgraceful flight. Whilst Washington was exerting himself to rally them a small corps of the enemy appeared, and they again broke

and fled in confusion. Though the British in sight did not exceed sixty, he could not, either by example, entreaty, or authority, prevail on a superior force to stand their ground and face that inconsiderable number. Such dastardly conduct raised a tempest in the usually tranquil mind of Washington. Having embarked in the cause from the purest principles, he viewed with infinite concern this shameful behavior as threatening ruin to his country; and impressed with these ideas, he hazarded his person for some considerable time in the rear of his own men and in front of the enemy, with his horse's head toward the latter, as if in expectation that by an honorable death he might escape the infamy he dreaded from the dastardly conduct of troops on whom he could place no dependence. His aides and the confidential friends around his person, by indirect violence, compelled him to retire. In consequence of their address and importunity a life was saved for public service which otherwise, from a sense of honor seemed to be devoted to almost certain destruction.

The troops who fled on this occasion amounted in all to eight regiments. They took refuge in the encampment of the main body at Harlem Plains.

In consequence of their misconduct in not resisting the landing of the British, General Putnam, who held the command in New York, was compelled to make a hasty retreat from the city, losing 15 men killed and 300 taken prisoners. Most of the heavy cannon and a large amount of baggage, stores, and provisions fell into the hands of the enemy.

Washington now drew all his forces together within the lines on Harlem Heights, and fixed his headquarters at Colonel Roger Morris's house, near Mount Washington, ten miles from New York.

While he was occupying this position Washington paid

much attention to the fortifying of his line by redoubts and intrenchments. In his rounds for the personal inspection of the works he observed some which were constructed with an unusual degree of science and skill, and on inquiring for the engineer who had planned them he was introduced to Alexander Hamilton, then a captain of artillery. Washington at once entered into conversation with this talented young officer, invited him to his marquee, and then and there commenced a lifelong friendship, the results of which were not less important to the country than to themselves.

"When the Americans were withdrawn from the city," says Gordon, "and no prospect of action remained, the British generals repaired to the house of Mr. Robert Murray, a gentleman of the Quaker persuasion. The lady of the house being at home entertained them most civilly with what served for, or was, cakes and wine. They were well pleased with the entertainment and tarried there near two hours or more, Governor Tryon seasoning the repast at times by joking Mrs. Murray about her American friends, for she was known to be a steady advocate for the liberties of the country. Meanwhile the Hessians and British, except a strong corps which marched down the road to take possession of the city, remained upon their arms inactive, which gave General Putnam the opportunity of escaping. Nothing could have been easier however than to have prevented it. A good body of troops, with two field pieces, in about twenty minutes, more or less, could have taken such a position as would necessarily have cut off Putnam's retreat. Colonel Grayson repeatedly said, speaking humorously, 'Mrs. Murray saved the American army.'"

The royal troops, on entering the city, were warmly received by the Tories. The state of feeling existing be-

tween the two hostile parties was fearfully exemplified by means of an accident that occurred a few nights after the occupation. This was a fire, which broke out in the dead of the night of September 21st (1776), and owing to the drouth of the season and a strong south wind increased with alarming rapidity. Upward of 1,000 buildings, Trinity Church among the number, were consumed, and but for the exertions of the soldiers and sailors the whole city would probably have been destroyed. In the excited state of party feeling it was said that the "Sons of Liberty" were the incendiaries, with a view to drive out the army, and several suspected persons were hurled into the blazing buildings by the British soldiers.

Having taken possession of New York, General Howe stationed a few troops in the town, and with the main body of his army encamped near the American lines. His right was at Horen's Hook, on the East river, and his left reached the North river near Bloomingdale, so that his encampment extended quite across the island, which is, in this place, scarcely two miles wide, and both his flanks were covered by his ships.

The strongest point of the American lines was at Kingsbridge, both sides of which had been carefully fortified. M'Gowan's Pass and Morris's Heights were also occupied in considerable force and rendered capable of being defended against superior numbers. A strong detachment was posted in an intrenched camp on the Heights of Harlem, within about a mile and a half of the British lines. This position of the armies favored the views of Washington. He wished to habituate his soldiers, by a series of successful skirmishes, to meet the enemy in the field.

Opportunities to make the experiments he wished were soon afforded. The day after the retreat from New York

the British appeared in considerable force in the plains between the two camps, and Washington immediately rode to his advanced posts, in order to make in person such arrangements as this movement might require. Soon after his arrival Colonel Knowlton, who, at the head of a corps of rangers, had been skirmishing with this party, came in and stated their numbers on conjecture at about 300 men, the main body being concealed in a wood.

Washington ordered Colonel Knowlton with his rangers and Major Leitch with three companies of the Third Virginia regiment, which had joined the army only the preceding day, to gain their rear, while he amused them with the appearance of making dispositions to attack their front.

This plan succeeded. The British ran eagerly down a hill in order to possess themselves of some fences and bushes, which presented an advantageous position against the party expected in front; and a firing commenced, but at too great a distance to do any execution. In the meantime Colonel Knowlton, not being precisely acquainted with their new position, made his attack rather on their flank than rear, and a warm action ensued.

In a short time Major Leitch, who had led the detachment with great intrepidity, was brought off the ground mortally wounded, having received three balls through his body, and soon afterward the gallant Colonel Knowlton also fell. Not discouraged by the loss of their field officers, the captains maintained their ground and continued the action with great animation. The British were reinforced, and Washington ordered some detachments from the adjacent regiments of New England and Maryland to the support of the Americans. Thus reinforced, they made a gallant charge, drove the enemy out of the

wood into the plain, and were pressing him still further, when Washington, content with the present advantage, called back his troops to their intrenchments.

In this sharp conflict (September 16, 1776) the loss of the Americans in killed and wounded did not exceed fifty men. The British lost more than double that number. But the real importance of the affair was derived from its operation on the spirits of the whole army. It was the first success they had obtained during this campaign, and its influence was very discernible. To give it the more effect, Washington, in his orders, publicly thanked the troops who had first advanced on the enemy and the others who had so resolutely supported them. He contrasted their conduct with that which had been exhibited the day before, and the result, he said, evidenced what might be done where officers and soldiers would exert themselves. Once more therefore he called upon them so to act as not to disgrace the noble cause in which they were engaged. He appointed a successor to "the gallant and brave Colonel Knowlton, who would," he said, "have been an honor to any country, and who had fallen gloriously, fighting at his post."

In this active part of the campaign, when the utmost stretch of every faculty was required to watch and counteract the plans of a skillful and powerful enemy, the effects of the original errors committed by Congress in its military establishment were beginning to be so seriously felt as to compel the Commander-in-Chief to devote a portion of his time and attention to the complete removal of the causes which produced them.

The situation was becoming extremely critical. The almost entire dissolution of the existing army, by the expiration of the time for which the greater number of the troops had been engaged, was fast approaching. No steps

had been taken to recruit the new regiments which Congress had resolved to raise for the ensuing campaign, and there was much reason to apprehend that in the actual state of things the terms offered would not hold forth sufficient inducements to fill them.

With so unpromising a prospect before him, Washington found himself pressed by an army permanent in its establishment, supplied with every requisite of war, formidable for its discipline and the experience of its leaders, and superior to him in numbers. These circumstances, and the impressions they created, will be best exhibited by an extract from a letter written at the time to Congress. It is in these words: "From the hours allotted to sleep I will borrow a few moments to convey my thoughts on sundry important matters to Congress. I shall offer them with that sincerity which ought to characterize a man of candor, and with the freedom which may be used in giving useful information, without incurring the imputation of presumption.

"We are now, as it were, upon the eve of another dissolution of our army. The remembrance of the difficulties which happened upon that occasion last year, the consequences which might have followed the change if proper advantages had been taken by the enemy, added to a knowledge of the present temper and disposition of the troops, reflect but a very gloomy prospect upon the appearance of things now, and satisfy me, beyond the possibility of doubt, that unless some speedy and effectual measures are adopted by Congress our cause will be lost.

"It is in vain to expect that any, or more than a trifling part of this army, will engage again in the service, on the encouragement offered by Congress. When men find that their townsmen and companions are receiving twenty, thirty, and more dollars, for a few months' service (which

is truly the case), this cannot be expected without using compulsion; and to force them into the service would answer no valuable purpose. When men are irritated and their passions inflamed they fly hastily and cheerfully to arms, but after the first emotions are over, to expect among such people as compose the bulk of an army that they are influenced by any other motives than those of interest is to look for what never did, and, I fear, never will, happen; the Congress will deceive themselves therefore if they expect it.

"A soldier, reasoned with upon the goodness of the cause he is engaged in, and the inestimable rights he is contending for, hears you with patience and acknowledges the truth of your observations, but adds that it is of no more consequence to him than to others. The officer makes you the same reply, with this further remark, that his pay will not support him, and he cannot ruin himself and family to serve his country, when every member of the community is equally benefited and interested by his labors. The few therefore who act upon principles of disinterestedness are, comparatively speaking, no more than a drop in the ocean. It becomes evidently clear then that as this contest is not likely to become the work of a day; as the war must be carried on systematically; and to do it you must have good officers, there is, in my judgment, no other possible means to obtain them but by establishing your army upon a permanent footing and giving your officers good pay. This will induce gentlemen and men of character to engage, and, until the bulk of your officers are composed of such persons as are actuated by principles of honor and a spirit of enterprise, you have little to expect from them. They ought to have such allowances as will enable them to live like and support the character of gentlemen, and not be driven by a scanty pittance

VALLEY FORGE — WASHINGTON AND LAFAYETTE

to the low and dirty arts which many of them practice, to filch the public of more than the difference of pay would amount to upon an ample allowance. Besides, something is due to the man who puts his life in your hands, hazards his health, and forsakes the sweets of domestic enjoyments. Why a captain in the Continental service should receive no more than five shilling currency per day for performing the same duties that an officer of the same rank in the British service receives ten shillings sterling for I never could conceive, especially when the latter is provided with every necessary he requires, upon the best terms, and the former can scarcely procure them at any rate. There is nothing that gives a man consequence and renders him fit for command like a support that renders him independent of everybody but the State he serves.

"With respect to the men, nothing but a good bounty can obtain them upon a permanent establishment, and for no shorter time than the continuance of the war ought they to be engaged, as facts incontestably prove that the difficulty and cost of enlistments increase with time. When the army was first raised at Cambridge, I am persuaded the men might have been got without a bounty for the war;* after that they began to see that the contest was not likely to end so speedily as was imagined, and to feel their consequence, by remarking that to get their militia, in the course of the last year, many towns were induced to

* We have already had occasion to remark that Congress and the people were extremely jealous of military power, and this was the reason for refusing to make long enlistments. They were afraid of a standing army. The example of Cromwell, displacing the Long Parliament, was comparatively recent; and the members of Congress were well read in British history. Washington asked Congress for a permanent army during the siege of Boston, but could not obtain it. They were at last forced, by dire necessity, into enlistments to last during the war.

give them a bounty. Foreseeing the evils resulting from this, and the destructive consequences which would unavoidably follow short enlistments, I took the liberty, in a long letter (date not now recollected, as my letter-book is not here), to recommend the enlistments for and during the war, assigning such reasons for it as experience has since convinced me were well founded. At that time $20 would, I am persuaded, have engaged the men for this term; but it will not do to look back — and if the present opportunity is slipped I am persuaded that twelve months more will increase our difficulties fourfold. I shall therefore take the liberty of giving it as my opinion that a good bounty be immediately offered, aided by the proffer of at least 100 or 150 acres of land, and a suit of clothes and a blanket to each noncommissioned officer and soldier, as I have good authority for saying that however high the men's pay may appear, it is barely sufficient, in the present scarcity and dearness of all kinds of goods, to keep them in clothes, much less to afford support to their families. If this encouragement then is given to the men, and such pay allowed to the officers as will induce gentlemen of liberal character and liberal sentiments to engage, and proper care and caution be used in the nomination (having more regard to the characters of persons than the number of men they can enlist), we should, in a little time, have an army able to cope with any that can be opposed to it, as there are excellent materials to form one out of; but whilst the only merit an officer possesses is his ability to raise men, whilst those men consider and treat him as an equal, and, in the character of an officer, regard him no more than a broomstick, being mixed together as one common herd, no order nor discipline can prevail, nor will the offi-

cer ever meet with that respect which is essentially necessary to due subordination.*

"To place any dependence upon militia is assuredly resting upon a broken staff. Men just dragged from the tender scenes of domestic life, unaccustomed to the din of arms, totally unacquainted with every kind of military skill, which, being followed by a want of confidence in themselves, when opposed to troops regularly trained, disciplined, and appointed — superior in knowledge and superior in arms — makes them timid and ready to fly from their own shadows. Besides, the sudden change in their manner of living, particularly in their lodging, brings on sickness in many, impatience in all, and such an unconquerable desire of returning to their respective homes that it not only produces shameful and scandalous desertions among themselves, but infuses the like spirit into others. Again, men accustomed to unbounded freedom and no control cannot brook the restraint which is indispensably necessary to the good order and government of an army; without which, licentiousness and every kind of disorder triumphantly reign. To bring men to a proper degree of subordination is not the work of a day, a month, or a year; and, unhappily for us and the cause we are engaged in, the little discipline I have been laboring to establish in the army under my immediate command is in a manner done away by having such a mixture of troops as have been called together within these few months."†

* In the recent disgraceful affair, on the landing of the British at Kipp's bay, the officers had set the example of running away. Washington's vivid recollection of this scene must have influenced him in the above remarks.

† Remarks similar to these and almost in the same language, with respect to the feelings of the militia, occur in a letter of General Greene's, written about the same time. Both letters suggest to the reader's mind a host of appalling difficulties surrounding Washington and embarrassing the operations of all the leading officers of the army.

The frequent remonstrances of Washington, the opinions of all military men, and the severe but correcting hand of experience had at length produced some effect on the government of the Union; and soon after the defeat on Long Island Congress had directed the committee composing the board of war to prepare a plan of operations for the next campaign. Their report proposed a permanent army, to be enlisted for the war, and to be raised by the several States, in proportion to their ability. A bounty of $20 was offered to each recruit, and small portions of land to every officer and soldier.

The resolutions adopting this report were received by Washington soon after the transmission of the foregoing letter. Believing the inducements they held forth for the completion of the army to be still insufficient, he, in his letter acknowledging the receipt of them, urged, in the most serious terms, the necessity of raising the pay of the officers and the bounty offered to recruits:

"Give me leave to say, sir," he observed, "I say it with due deference and respect (and my knowledge of the facts, added to the importance of the cause and the stake I hold it in must justify the freedom), that your affairs are in a more unpromising way than you seem to apprehend.

"Your army, as mentioned in my last, is upon the eve of political dissolution. True it is, you have voted a larger one in lieu of it, but the season is late and there is a material difference between voting battalions and raising men. In the latter there are more difficulties than Congress seem aware of, which makes it my duty (as I have been informed of the prevailing sentiments of this army) to inform them that unless the pay of the officers (especially that of the field officers) is raised, the chief part of those that are worth retaining will leave the service at the expiration of the present term; as the soldiers will also if

some greater encouragement is not offered them than $20 and 100 acres of land."

After urging in strong terms the necessity of a more liberal compensation to the army, and stating that the British were actually raising a regiment with a bounty of £10 sterling for each recruit, he added:

"When the pay and establishment of an officer once become objects of interested attention, the sloth, negligence, and even disobedience of orders, which at this time but too generally prevail, will be purged off; but while the service is viewed with indifference, while the officer conceives that he is rather conferring than receiving an obligation, there will be a total relaxation of all order and discipline, and everything will move heavily on, to the great detriment of the service and inexpressible trouble and vexation of the General.

"The critical situation of our affairs at this time will justify my saying that no time is to be lost in making fruitless experiments. An unavailing trial of a month, to get an army upon the terms proposed, may render it impracticable to do it at all and prove fatal to our cause, as I am not sure whether any rubs in the way of our enlistments, or unfavorable turn in our affairs, may not prove the means of the enemy's recruiting men faster than we do."

After stating at large the confusion and delay, inseparable from the circumstance that the appointments for the new army were to be made by the States, the letter proceeds:

"Upon the present plan I plainly foresee an intervention of time between the old and new army, which must be filled with militia, if to be had, with whom no man who has any regard for his own reputation can undertake to be answerable for consequences. I shall also be mistaken in my conjectures if we do not lose the most valuable offi-

cers in this army under the present mode of appointing them; consequently, if we have an army at all, it will be composed of materials not only entirely raw, but, if uncommon pains are not taken, entirely unfit; and I see such a distrust and jealousy of military power that the Commander-in-Chief has not an opportunity, even by recommendation, to give the least assurances of reward for the most essential services.

"In a word, such a cloud of perplexing circumstances appears before me, without one flattering hope, that I am thoroughly convinced, unless the most vigorous and decisive exertions are immediately adopted to remedy these evils, the certain and absolute loss of our liberties will be the inevitable consequence, as one unhappy stroke will throw a powerful weight into the scale against us and enable General Howe to recruit his army as fast as we shall ours; numbers being disposed and many actually doing so already. Some of the most probable remedies, and such as experience has brought to my more intimate knowledge, I have taken the liberty to point out; the rest I beg leave to submit to the consideration of Congress.

"I ask pardon for taking up so much of their time with my opinions, but I should betray that trust which they and my country have reposed in me were I to be silent upon matters so extremely interesting."

On receiving this very serious letter, Congress passed resolutions conforming to many of its suggestions. The pay of the officers was raised and a suit of clothes allowed annually to each soldier. The Legislatures of the States having troops in the Continental service, either at New York, Ticonderoga, or New Jersey, were requested to depute committees to those places, in order to officer the regiments on the new establishment; and it was recom-

mended to the committees to consult Washington on the subject of appointments.

These measures afforded much gratification to Washington. He was also greatly relieved by effecting an exchange of prisoners with General Howe, in which those captured in Canada were included. Among the officers restored to the army by this exchange were Lord Stirling and Capt. Daniel Morgan, who had served at the siege of Quebec with Arnold and Montgomery. Washington recommended Morgan to Congress for the command of a regiment of riflemen about to be raised, an appointment which was made with signal advantage to the service.

Washington now learned that the Tories were forming military organizations to aid the enemy. Oliver De Lancey, a conspicuous man in New York, was actually appointed brigadier-general by Lord Howe, with authority to raise a brigade, and he was offering liberal pay for soldiers, and commissions to those who would bring in a given number of recruits. Robert Rogers, of New Hampshire, who had served with credit in the French War, and who had since served the enemy as a spy in Canada, been arrested, and afterward liberated on promise of good behavior, was also enlisting a regiment of Tories. He had obtained a colonel's commission, and his regiment was to be called the Queen's Rangers. This man was one of the most infamous traitors in the British service, and the Americans, both officers and men, were especially desirous to capture and punish him.

The armies did not long retain their position on York Island. General Howe was sensible of the strength of the American camp and was not disposed to force it. His plan was to compel Washington to abandon it or to give battle in a situation in which a defeat must be attended with the total destruction of his army. With this view,

after throwing up intrenchments on McGowan's Hill for the protection of New York, he determined to gain the rear of the American camp by the New England road, and also to possess himself of the North river above Kingsbridge. To assure himself of the practicability of acquiring the command of the river, three frigates, the Phœnix, Roebuck, and Tartar, passed up it under the fire from Fort Washington, and from the opposite post on the Jersey shore, afterward called Fort Lee, without sustaining any injury from the batteries or being impeded by the *chevaux-de-frise* which had been sunk in the channel between those forts, under the direction of General Putnam.

This point being ascertained, he embarked a great part of his army on board flat-bottomed boats and, passing through Hell Gate into the Sound, landed at Frog's Neck, about nine miles from the camp on the Heights of Harlem.

In consequence of this movement, Washington strengthened the post at Kingsbridge and detached some regiments to West Chester for the purpose of skirmishing with the enemy, so soon as he should march from the ground he occupied. The road from Frog's Point to Kingsbridge leads through a strong country, intersected by numerous stone fences, so as to render it difficult to move artillery, or even infantry, in compact columns, except along the main road, which had been broken up in several places. Washington therefore entertained sanguine hopes of the event should a direct attack be made on his camp.

General Howe, if we may believe his own account, continued some days waiting for his artillery, military stores, and reinforcements from Staten Island, which were detained by unfavorable winds. The Americans however attributed his delay to the destruction of the causeway leading from his position to the mainland, and the menacing

attitude of the American batteries, and the detachments from Washington's army, by whom he was inclosed.

In the meantime the propriety of removing the American army from its present situation was submitted to a council of general officers. After much investigation, it was declared to be impracticable, without a change of position, to keep up their communication with the country and avoid being compelled to fight under great disadvantages or to surrender themselves prisoners of war. General Lee, who had just arrived from the south, and whose experience as well as late success gave great weight to his opinions, urged the necessity of this movement with much earnestness.* It was, at the same time, determined to hold Fort Washington and to defend it as long as possible. A resolution of Congress of the 11th of October, desiring General Washington, by every art and expense, to obstruct, if possible, the navigation of the river, contributed not inconsiderately to this determination.

In pursuance of this opinion of the military council, Washington began moving the army up the North river, so as to extend its front, or left, toward the White Plains, beyond the British right, and thus keep open its communication with the country. The right, or rear division, remained a few days longer about Kingsbridge, under the command of General Lee, for the security of the heavy baggage and military stores, which, in consequence of the difficulty of obtaining wagons, could be but slowly removed.

General Howe, checked at Frog's Neck, abandoned that

*Lee was always overrated till he fell into the enemy's hands. The success of the Americans in repelling the enemy's attack on Charleston was due to Moultrie and the brave fellows who defended the Palmetto fort, and not at all to Lee, who was in favor of abandoning the fort as a means of defense, but was fortunately overruled by the opinions of the other officers.

post, and after uniting his forces at Pell's Point, moved forward his whole army, except four brigades destined for the defense of New York, through Pelham Manor toward New Rochelle. Some skirmishes took place on the march with a part of Glover's brigade, in which the conduct of the Americans was mentioned with satisfaction by the Commander-in-Chief; and, as Howe took post at New Rochelle, Washington occupied the heights between that place and the North river.

At New Rochelle the British army was joined by the second division of Germans, under the command of General Knyphausen, and by an incomplete regiment of cavalry from Ireland, some of whom had been captured on their passage. Both armies now marched toward the White Plains, a piece of ground already occupied by a detachment of militia. The main body of the American troops formed a long line of intrenched camps, extending from twelve to thirteen miles, on the different heights from Valentine's Hill, near Kingsbridge, to the White Plains, fronting the British line of march, and the Bronx, which divided the two armies. The motions of General Howe were anxiously watched, not only for the purposes of security and of avoiding a general action, but in order to seize any occasion which might present itself of engaging his outposts with advantage.

While the British army lay at New Rochelle the position of a corps of American loyalists, commanded by that infamous traitor, Colonel Rogers, was supposed to furnish such an occasion. He was advanced further eastward, to Mamaroneck, on the Sound, where he was believed to be covered by the other troops. An attempt was made to surprise him in the night by a detachment which should pass between him and the main body of the British army, and, by a *coup de main*, bear off his whole

corps. Rogers was surprised and about sixty of his regiment killed and taken, the traitor himself escaping capture.* The loss of the Americans was only two killed and eight or ten wounded; among the latter was Major Green, of Virginia, a brave officer, who led the detachment, and who received a ball through his body.

Not long afterward a regiment of Pennsylvania riflemen, under Colonel Hand, engaged an equal number of Hessian chasseurs, with some advantage.

The caution of the English General was increased by these evidences of enterprise in his adversary. His object seems to have been to avoid skirmishes and to bring on a general action, if that could be effected under favorable circumstances; if not, he calculated on nearly all the advantages of a victory from the approaching dissolution of the American army. He proceeded therefore slowly. His march was in close order, his encampments compact and well guarded with artillery, and the utmost circumspection was used to leave no vulnerable point.

As the sick and baggage reached a place of safety, Washington gradually drew in his outposts and took possession of the heights on the east side of the Bronx, fronting the head of the British columns, at the distance of seven or eight miles from them. Here he was soon joined by Lee, who, after securing the sick and the baggage, had, with considerable address, brought up the rear division of the army, an operation the more difficult as the deficiency of teams was such that a large portion of the labor usually performed by horses or oxen devolved on men.

Washington was encamped on high broken ground, with his right flank on the Bronx. This stream meandered so as also to cover the front of his right wing, which extended along the road leading toward New Rochelle, as

* Rogers, says Irving, skulked off in the dark at the first fire. He was too old a partisan to be easily entrapped.

far as the brow of the hill where his center was posted. His left, which formed almost a right angle with his center, and was nearly parallel to his right, extending along the hills northward, so as to keep possession of the commanding ground and secure a retreat, should it be necessary, to a still stronger position in his rear.*

* Gordon gives the following anecdotes of this period of the war:

General Lee while at White Plains lodged in a small house close in with the road, by which General Washington had to pass when out reconnoitering. Returning with his officers they called in and took dinner. They were no sooner gone than Lee told his aids, "You must look me out another place for I shall have Washington and all his puppies continually calling on me, and they will eat me up." The next day Lee seeing Washington out upon the like business, and supposing that he should have another visit, ordered his servant to write with chalk upon the door, *no victuals dressed here to-day.* When the company approached and saw the writing, they pushed off with much good humor for their own table, without resenting the habitual oddity of the man.

It happened that a garden of a widow woman, which lay between the two camps, was robbed at night. Her son, a mere boy, and little of his age, asked leave for finding out and securing the pilferer in case he should return; which being granted, he concealed himself with a gun among the weeds. A British grenadier, a strapping Highlander, came and filled his large bag; when he had it on his shoulder, the boy left his covert, came softly behind him, cocked his gun, and called out to the fellow, "You are my prisoner; if you attempt to throw your bag down I will shoot you dead; go forward in that road." The boy kept close to him, threatened, and was always prepared to execute his threatening. Thus the boy drove him into the American camp, where he was secured. When the grenadier was at liberty to throw down his bag and saw who had made him prisoner he was horribly mortified, and exclaimed, "A British grenadier made prisoner by such a d—d brat, by such a d—d brat!" The American officers were highly entertained with the adventure, made a collection for the boy, and gave him some pounds. He returned fully satisfied with the losses his mother had sustained. The soldier had side arms, but they were of no use, as he could not get rid of his bag.

On the right of the army and on the west side of the Bronx, about one mile from camp, on a road leading from the North river, was a hill, of which General M'Dougal was ordered to take possession, for the purpose of covering the right flank. His detachment consisted of about 1,600 men, principally militia, and his communication with the main army was open, that part of the Bronx being passable without difficulty.

Intrenchments were thrown up to strengthen the lines.

General Howe, having made arrangements to attack Washington in his camp, advanced early in the morning (October 25, 1776) in two columns, the right commanded by Sir Henry Clinton and the left by General Knyphausen; and, about 10, his van appeared in full view, on which a cannonade commenced without much execution on either side.

The British right formed behind a rising ground, about a mile in front of the American camp, and extending from the road leading from Mamaroneck toward the Bronx, stood opposed to the American center.

On viewing Washington's situation Howe, who accompanied Knyphausen, determined to carry the hill occupied by M'Dougal, as preliminary to an attack on the center and right of the American camp. He therefore directed Colonel Rahl, with a brigade of Hessians, to cross the Bronx and make a circuit so as to turn M'Dougal's right flank, while Brigadier-General Leslie, with a strong corps of British and Hessian troops, should attack him in front.

When Rahl had gained his position the detachment commanded by Leslie also crossed the Bronx and commenced a vigorous attack. The militia in the front line immediately fled, but the regulars maintained their ground with great gallantry. Colonel Smallwood's regiment of Maryland and Colonel Reitzimer's of New York advanced

boldly toward the foot of the hill to meet Leslie, but, after a sharp encounter, were overpowered by numbers and compelled to retreat.

General Leslie then attacked the remaining part of M'Dougal forces, who were soon driven from the hill, but kept up for some time an irregular fire from the stone walls about the scene of action. General Putnam, with Beal's brigade, was ordered to support them, but not having arrived till the hill was lost, the attempt to regain it was deemed unadvisable, and the troops retreated to the main army.

In this animated engagement, commonly called the battle of White Plains, the loss was supposed to be nearly equal. That of the Americans was between 300 and 400 in killed, wounded, and taken. Colonel Smallwood was among the wounded.

Washington continued in his lines, expecting an assault. But a considerable part of the day having been exhausted in gaining the hill which had been occupied by M'Dougal, the meditated attempt on his intrenchments was postponed until the next morning, and the British army lay on their arms the following night, in order of battle, on the ground taken during the day.

This interval was employed by Washington in strengthening his works, removing his sick and baggage, and preparing for the expected attack by adapting the arrangement of his troops to the existing state of things. His left maintained its position, but his right was drawn back to stronger ground. Perceiving this, and being unwilling further offensive operations until Lord Percy should arrive with four battalions from New York and two from Mamaroneck. This reinforcement was received on the evening of the 30th, and preparations were then made to force the American intrenchments the next morning. In

the night and during the early part of the succeeding day a violent rain still further postponed the assault.

Having now removed his provisions and heavy baggage to much stronger ground, and apprehending that the British general, whose left wing extended along the height taken from M'Dougal to his rear, might turn his camp and occupy the strong ground to which he designed to retreat should an attempt on his lines prove successful, Washington changed his position in the night and withdrew to the Heights of North Castle, about five miles from the White Plains.

Deeming this position too strong to be attempted with prudence, General Howe determined to change his plan of operations and to give a new direction to his efforts.

While Forts Washington and Lee were held by the Americans, his movements were checked and New York insecure. With a view to the acquisition of these posts, he directed General Knyphausen to take possession of Kingsbridge, which was defended by a small party of Americans placed in Fort Independence. On his approach this party retreated to Fort Washington, and Knyphausen encamped between that place and Kingsbridge.

In the meantime General Howe retired slowly down the North river. His designs were immediately penetrated by Washington, who perceived the necessity of passing a part of his army into Jersey, but was restrained from immediately leaving the strong ground he occupied by the apprehension that his adversary might in that event return suddenly and gain his rear. A council of war was called which determined unanimously that should General Howe continue his march toward New York all the troops raised on the west side of the Hudson should cross that river, to be afterward followed by those raised

in the eastern part of the continent, leaving 3,000 men for the defense of the Highlands about the North river.

In a letter to Congress, communicating this movement of the British army and this determination of the council, the General said: "I cannot indulge the idea that General Howe, supposing him to be going to New York, means to close the campaign and to sit down without attempting something more. I think it highly probable and almost certain that he will make a descent with part of his troops into the Jerseys, and as soon as I am satisfied that the present manœuvre is real and not a feint I shall use all the means in my power to forward a part of our force to counteract his designs. I expect the enemy will bend their force against Fort Washington and invest it immediately. From some advices it is an object that will attract their earliest attention."

He also addressed a letter to the Governor of New Jersey expressing a decided opinion that General Howe would not content himself with investing Fort Washington, but would invade the Jerseys, and urging him to put the militia in the best possible condition to reinforce the army, and to take the place of the new levies, who could not, he suggested, be depended on to continue in service one day longer than the 1st of December, the time for which they engaged.

Immediate intelligence of this movement was likewise given to General Greene, who commanded in the Jerseys, and his attention was particularly pointed to Fort Washington.

As the British army approached Kingsbridge three ships of war passed up the North river, notwithstanding the fire from Forts Washington and Lee, and notwithstanding the

additional obstructions which had been placed in the channel.

On being informed of this another letter was addressed to General Greene stating that this fact was so plain a proof of the inefficacy of all the obstructions thrown in the river as to justify a change in the dispositions which had been made. "If," continued the letter, "we cannot prevent vessels from passing up, and the enemy are possessed of the surrounding country, what valuable purpose can it answer to attempt to hold a post from which the expected benefit cannot be derived? I am therefore inclined to think it will not be prudent to hazard the men and stores at Mount Washington; but, as you are on the spot, I leave it to you to give such orders respecting the evacuation of the place as you may think most advisable, and so far revoke the orders given to Colonel Magaw to defend it to the last."

Measures were now taken to cross the North river with the troops which had been raised on its western side, and Washington determined to accompany that division of the army. The eastern regiments remained on the eastern side of the river, under the command of Lee, with orders to join the Commander-in-Chief should the British army cross the Hudson.

After visiting the posts about Peekskill, and making all the arrangements in his power for their defense, Washington passed the North river in the rear of the troops designed to act in the Jerseys, and proceeded to the quarters of General Greene near Fort Lee.

From too great a confidence in the strength of Fort Washington and a conviction of its importance General Greene had not withdrawn its garrison under the discretionary orders he had received, but still indulged a hope

that the post might be maintained, or, should its situation become desperate, that means might be found to transport the troops across the river to the Jersey shore, which was defended by Fort Lee.

Mount Washington is a high piece of rocky ground near the North river, very difficult of ascent, especially toward the north or Kingsbridge. The fort was capable of containing about 1,000 men, but the lines and outworks, which were chiefly on the southern side toward New York, were drawn quite across the island. The ground was naturally strong, the approaches difficult, and the fortifications, though not sufficient to resist heavy artillery, were believed to be in a condition to resist any attempt to carry them by storm. The garrison consisted of troops, some of whom were among the best in the American army, and the command had been given to Colonel Magaw, a brave and intelligent officer in whom great confidence was placed.

General Howe, after retiring from the White Plains, encamped at a small distance from Kingsbridge, on the Heights of Fordham, and having made the necessary preparations for an assault summoned the garrison to surrender, on pain of being put to the sword. Colonel Magaw replied that he should defend the place to the last extremity, and communicated the summons to General Greene at Fort Lee, who transmitted it to the Comander-in-Chief, then at Hackensack. He immediately rode to Fort Lee, and, though it was late in the night, was proceeding to Fort Washington where he expected to find Generals Putnam and Greene, when, in crossing the river, he met those officers returning from a visit to that fort. They reported that the garrison was in high spirits and would make a good defense, on which he returned with them to Fort Lee.

Early next morning Colonel Magaw posted his troops

partly on a commanding hill north of the fort, partly in the outermost of the lines drawn across the island on the south of the fort, and partly between those lines on the woody and rocky heights fronting Harlem river, where the ground being extremely difficult of ascent the works were not closed. Colonel Rawlings, of Maryland, commanded on the hill toward Kingsbridge; Colonel Cadwalader, of Pennsylvania, in the lines, and Colonel Magaw himself continued in the fort.

The strength of the place had not deterred the British general from resolving to carry it by storm, and on receiving the answer of Colonel Magaw arrangements were made for a vigorous attack next day. About 10 the assailants appeared before the works and moved to the assault in four different quarters. Their first division, consisting of Hessians and Waldeckers, amounting to about 5,000 men, under the command of General Knyphausen, advanced on the north side of the fort against the hill occupied by Colonel Rawlings, who received them with great gallantry. The second, on the east, consisting of the British light infantry and guards, was led by Brigadier-General Matthews, supported by Lord Cornwallis, at the head of the grenadiers and the Thirty-third regiment. These troops crossed Harlem river in boats, under cover of the artillery planted in the works which had been erected on the opposite side of the river, and landed within the third line of defense which crossed the island. The third division was conducted by Lieutenant-Colonel Stirling, who passed the river higher up; and the fourth by Lord Percy, accompanied by General Howe in person. This division was to attack the lines in front on the south side.

The attacks on the north and south by General Knyphausen and Lord Percy were made about the same instant

on Colonels Rawlings and Cadwalader, who maintained their ground for a considerable time; but while Colonel Cadwalader was engaged in the first line against Lord Percy the second and third divisions, which crossed Harlem river, made good their landing and dispersed the troops fronting that river, as well as a detachment sent by Colonel Cadwalader to support them. These being overpowered and the British advancing between the fort and the lines it became necessary to abandon them. In retreating to the fort, some of the men were intercepted by the division under Colonel Stirling and made prisoners.

The resistance on the north was of longer duration. Rawlings maintained his ground with firmness, and his riflemen did vast execution. A three-gun battery also played on Knyphausen with great effect. At length the Hessian columns gained the summit of the hill, after which Colonel Rawlings, who perceived the danger which threatened his rear, retreated under the guns of the fort.

Having carried the lines and all the strong ground adjoining them the British general again summoned Colonel Magaw to surrender. While the capitulation was in a course of arrangement a Captain Gooch boldly ventured to cross over from Fort Lee with a letter from General Washington to Colonel Magaw, acquainting him that if he could hold out till night the garrison should be taken off. He delivered the letter, pushed through the fire of the enemy, preferring that danger to being made a prisoner and escaped unhurt. Washington could view several parts of the attack, and when he saw his men bayoneted and in that way killed while begging quarter, he cried with the tenderness of a child and exclaimed at the barbarity that was practised. His heart had not been steeled by plunging into acts of cruelty. When General Lee read the

letter sent by express, giving an account of Fort Washington's being taken, resentment and vexation led him, unfeeling as he was in common, to weep plentifully. He wrote on the 19th to the Commander-in-Chief: "Oh! General, why would you be overpersuaded by men of inferior judgment to your own? It was a cursed affair." He had exclaimed before, upon hearing that the defense of it was to be risked, "Then we are undone."*

When Colonel Magaw received Washington's communication requesting him to hold out till evening, he had proceeded too far to retreat, and it is probable the place could not have resisted an assault from so formidable a force as threatened it. The greatest difficulties had been overcome; the fort was too small to contain all the men, and their ammunition was nearly exhausted. Under these circumstances the garrison became prisoners of war.

The loss on this occasion was the greatest the Americans had ever sustained. The garrison was stated by Washington at about 2,000 men. Yet, in a report published as from Howe, the number of prisoners is said to be 2,600, exclusive of officers. Either Howe must have included in his report persons who were not soldiers or Washington must have comprehended the regulars only in his letter. The last conjecture is most probably correct. The loss of the assailants, according to Mr. Stedman,† amounted to 800 men. This loss fell heaviest on the Germans.

On the surrender of Fort Washington it was determined to evacuate Fort Lee; and a removal of the stores was immediately commenced. Before this operation could be completed a detachment commanded by Lord Corn-

* Gordon, "History of the American Revolution."

† A British writer, author of the "History of the American War."

wallis, amounting to about 6,000 men, crossed the North river below Dobbs Ferry and endeavored by a rapid march to inclose the garrison between the North and Hackensack rivers. An immediate retreat from that narrow neck of land had become indispensable and was with difficulty effected. All the heavy cannon at Fort Lee, except two twelve-pounders, with a considerable quantity of provisions and military stores, including 300 tents, were lost.

Before following Washington in his retreat through "the Jerseys" we will notice some events which had transpired in the north during his recent operations on the eastern shore of the Hudson.

In our account of the invasion of Canada by Montgomery and Arnold we brought the narrative up to the point where that country was evacuated by the Americans in June, 1776. They still occupied Crown Point and Ticonderoga. They also had command of Lake Champlain, and Sir Guy Carleton, the British Commander-in-Chief in Canada, deemed it prudent to wrest it from them before he advanced further. To effect this he must build a fleet, which required time and labor. Meantime General Gates was ordered to take command of the northern army, which was to be reinforced with 6,000 militia.

In characterizing the recent attempt to conquer Canada Marshall makes the following very judicious remarks: It was a bold, and at one period, promised to be a successful effort to annex that extensive province to the united Colonies. The dispositions of the Canadians favored the measure, and had Quebec fallen there is reason to believe the colony would have entered cordially into the Union. Had a few incidents turned out fortunately, had Arnold been able to reach Quebec a few days sooner, or to cross the St. Lawrence on his first arrival — or had the gallant

Montgomery not fallen in the assault of the 31st December, it is probable the expedition would have been crowned with complete success. But the radical causes of failure, putting fortune out of the question, were to be found in the lateness of the season when the troops were assembled, in a defect of the preparations necessary for such a service, and still more in the shortness of the time for which the men were enlisted. Had the expedition been successful the practicability of maintaining the country is much to be doubted. Whilst General Montgomery lay before Quebec and expected to obtain possession of the place he extended his views to its preservation. His plan required a permanent army of 10,000 men, strong fortifications at Jacques Cartier and the rapids of Richelieu, and armed vessels in the river above the last place. With this army and these precautions, he thought the country might be defended, but not with an inferior force.

It seems, therefore, to have been an enterprise requiring means beyond the ability of Congress, and the strength exhausted on it would have been more judiciously employed in securing the command of the Lakes George and Champlain and the fortified towns upon them.

While General Carleton was making preparations to enter the lakes General Schuyler was using his utmost exertions to retain the command of them. But so great was the difficulty of procuring workmen and materials that he found it impossible to equip a fleet which would be equal to the exigency. It consisted of only fifteen small vessels, the largest of which was a schooner mounting twelve guns, carrying six and four-pound balls. The command of this squadron, at the instance of Washington, was given to General Arnold.

General Carleton evinced great activity and enterprise

in preparing a fleet to encounter that of Arnold on Lake Champlain. Thirty vessels were required to give a decided superiority on those waters, the access to which by the Sorel was impracticable to ships, and most difficult and laborious to boats on account of numerous shallows, falls, and rapids.

The framework of some vessels was sent for to England, but this required time. Carleton therefore sent detachments from the King's ships stationed at Quebec, with volunteers from the transports and a corps of artillery — in all about 700 men — to fell timber and to occupy a favorable post on the shore of Lake Champlain. The keel and floor timbers of the Inflexible, a ship of 300 tons, which had been laid at Quebec, were taken to pieces, carried over to St. John's, and laid down again at a corner of the lake where a little dock yard was improvised; thirty long-boats, many large batteaux or flat-bottomed boats and a gondola of thirty tons were carried up to the spot, partly by land and partly by being dragged up the shoals and rapids of the river Sorel at an extraordinary expense of human labor.

Lieutenant Schanck, an officer who possessed great mechanical ingenuity, superintended the works at the dock-yard, where timber which had been growing in the forest in the morning, was turned into part of a ship before night.

In twenty-eight days from the relaying her keel the Inflexible was launched, rigged, armed with eighteen twelve-pounders, and equipped for service; two schooners, the Maria and Carleton, were put together with equal rapidity, and the flotilla was completed by the Loyal Convert gondola, the Thunder, a kind of flat-bottomed raft carrying twelve heavy guns and two howitzers, and twenty-four boats armed each with a field-piece or carriage-gun. The whole thing seemed like magic! In a few weeks the

British, from not having a single boat, had a force sufficient to sweep the Lakes Champlain and George from end to end.

This formidable fleet, having on board General Carleton himself, and navigated by 700 prime seamen, under the command of Captain Pringle, proceeded immediately in quest of Arnold, who was advantageously posted between the Island of Valicour and the western main.*

Notwithstanding the disparity of force a warm action ensued. A wind, unfavorable to the British, kept the Inflexible and some other large vessels at too great a distance to render any service. This circumstance enabled Arnold to keep up the engagement until night, when Captain Pringle discontinued it, and anchored his whole fleet in a line, as near the vessels of his adversary as was practicable. In this engagement the best schooner belonging to the American flotilla was burnt, and a gondola was sunk.

In the night Arnold attempted to escape to Ticonderoga, and the next morning was out of sight, but being immediately pursued was overtaken about noon and brought to action a few leagues short of Crown Point. He kept up a warm engagement for about two hours, during which the vessels that were most ahead escaped to Ticonderoga. Two galleys and five gondolas, which remained, made a desperate resistance. At length one of them struck, after which Arnold ran the remaining vessels on shore, and blew

* An English writer says: "Sir Guy Carleton himself embarked with the squadron — the strangest squadron that ever English seamen had seen. Captain Pringle was Commodore, with his pennant on the Inflexible; and among those young officers who were appointed to the Carleton schooner was one who was destined to become one of the most distinguished of British naval commanders,— this was Edward Pellew, then a midshipman, afterward Admiral Viscount Exmouth.

them up, having first saved his men, though great efforts were made to take them.

On the approach of the British army a small detachment, which had occupied Crown Point as an outpost, evacuated the place and retired to Ticonderoga, which Schuyler determined to defend to the last extremity.

General Carleton took possession of Crown Point* and advanced a part of his fleet into Lake George within view of Ticonderoga. His army also approached that place, as if designing to invest it, but after reconnoitering the works, and observing the steady countenance of the garrison, he thought it too late to lay siege to the fortress. Re-embarking his army he returned to Canada, where he placed it in winter quarters, making the Isle aux Noix his most advanced post.

In the next chapter we return to Washington with the remnant of his army at Hackensack.

* During Carleton's stay at Crown Point, young Pellew nearly succeeded in capturing Arnold. That General, having ventured upon the lake in a boat, was observed, and chased so closely by the midshipman, that, when he reached the shore and escaped, he left his stock and buckle in the boat behind him. "This," says the biographer of Exmouth, "is still preserved by Mr. Pellew's elder brother, to whom Arnold's son, not many years ago, confirmed the particulars of his father's escape."— Ostler, "Life of Admiral Viscount Exmouth."

CHAPTER VIII.

WASHINGTON'S MASTERLY RETREAT THROUGH THE JERSEYS.

1776.

WE left Washington at Hackensack, having just witnessed the capture of Forts Washington and Lee. In a letter to his brother, John Augustine Washington, dated Hackensack, November 19, 1776, we find his commentary on the recent disaster and a vivid account of his difficult position in one of the darkest periods of the Revolutionary War. "This is a most unfortunate affair," he writes, "and has given me great mortification, as we have lost not only 2,000 men that were there, but a good deal of artillery, and some of the best arms we had. And what adds to my mortification is that this post, after the last ships went past it, was held contrary to my wishes and opinions, as I conceived it to be a hazardous one; but it having been determined on by a full council of general officers, and a resolution of Congress having been received strongly expressive of their desire that the channel of the river, which we had been laboring to stop for a long time at that place, might be obstructed if possible, and knowing that this could not be done unless there were batteries to protect the obstruction, I did not care to give an absolute order for withdrawing the garrison till I could get round and see the situation of things, and then it became too late, as the fort was invested. Upon the passing of the last ships I had given it as my opinion to

General Greene, under whose care it was, that it would be best to evacuate the place; but as the order was discretionary, and his opinion differed from mine, it unhappily was delayed too long to my great grief, as I think General Howe, considering his army and ours, would have but a poor tale to tell without it, and would have found it difficult, unless some southern expedition may prove successful, to reconcile the people of England to the conquest of a few pitiful islands, none of which were defensible, considering the great number of their ships and the power they have by sea to surround and render them unapproachable.

"It is a matter of great grief and surprise to me to find the different States so slow and inattentive to that essential business of levying their quotas of men. In ten days from this date, there will not be above 2,000 men, if that number, of the fixed established regiments on this side of Hudson river to oppose Howe's whole army, and very little more on the other to secure the eastern Colonies, and the important passes through the Highlands to Albany and the country about the lakes. In short, it is impossible for me, in the compass of a letter, to give you any idea of our situation, of my difficulties, and of the constant perplexities and mortifications I meet with, derived from the unhappy policy of short enlistments, and delaying them too long. Last fall, or winter, before the army which was then to be raised was set about, I represented in clear and explicit terms the evils which would arise from short enlistments, the expenses which must attend the raising an army every year, the futility of such an army when raised, and if I had spoken with a prophetic spirit I could not have foretold the evils with more accuracy than I did. All the year since I have been pressing Congress to delay

no time in engaging men upon such terms as would insure success, telling them that the longer it was delayed the more difficult it would prove. But the measure was not commenced till it was too late to be effected, and then in such a manner as to bid adieu to every hope of getting an army from which any services are to be expected; the different States, without regard to the qualifications of an officer, quarreling about the appointments and nominating such as are not fit to be shoeblacks, from the local attachments of this or that member of assembly.

"I am wearied almost to death with the retrograde motion of things, and I solemnly protest that a pecuniary reward of £20,000 a year would not induce me to undergo what I do, and after all perhaps to lose my character, as it is impossible, under such a variety of distressing circumstances, to conduct matters agreeably to public expectation, or even to the expectation of those who employ me, as they will not make proper allowances for the difficulties their own errors have occasioned."

After crossing the Hackensack Washington posted his troops along the western bank of that river but was unable to dispute its passage. At the head of about 3,000 effectives, exposed, without tents, in an inclement season, he was in a level country without a single intrenching tool, among people far from being zealous in the American cause. In other respects this situation was dangerous. The Passaic, in his rear, after running several miles nearly parallel to the Hackensack, unites with that river below the ground occupied by the Americans, who were consequently still exposed to the hazard of being inclosed between two rivers.

This gloomy state of things was not brightened by the prospect before him. In casting his eyes around no cheer-

ing object presented itself. No confidence could be placed on receiving reinforcements from any quarter. But in no situation could Washington despond. His exertions to collect an army and to impede the progress of his enemy were perseveringly continued. Understanding that Sir Guy Carleton no longer threatened Ticonderoga he directed General Schuyler to hasten the troops of Pennsylvania and Jersey to his assistance, and ordered Lee to cross the North river and be in readiness to join him should the enemy continue the campaign. But, under the influence of the same fatal cause which had acted elsewhere, these armies, too, were melting away and would soon be almost totally dissolved. General Mercer, who commanded a part of the flying camp stationed about Bergen, was also called in, but these troops had engaged to serve only till the 1st of December, and like the other six months' men had already abandoned the army in great numbers. No hope existed of retaining the remnant after they should possess a legal right to be discharged, and there was not much probability of supplying their places with other militia. To New England he looked with anxious hope, and his requisitions on those States received prompt attention. Six thousand militia from Massachusetts and a considerable body from Connecticut were ordered to his assistance, but some delay in assembling them was unavoidable, and their march was arrested by the appearance of the enemy in their immediate neighborhood.

Three thousand men, conducted by Sir Henry Clinton, who were embarked on board a fleet commanded by Sir Peter Parker, sailed late in November from New York, and without much opposition took possession of Newport. This invasion excited serious alarm in Massachusetts and Connecticut, and these States retained for their own de-

fense the militia who had been embodied at the instance of the Commander-in-Chief.*

Not intending to maintain his present position Washington had placed some regiments along the Hackensack to afford the semblance of defending its passage until his stores could be removed, and with the residue of the troops crossed the Passaic and took post at Newark. Soon after he had marched Major-General Vaughan appeared before the new bridge over the Hackensack. The American detachment which had been left in the rear, being unable to defend it, broke it down, and retired before him over the Passaic.

Having entered the open country Washington determined to halt a few days on the south side of this river, make some show of resistance, and endeavor to collect such a force as would keep up the semblance of an army. His letters, not having produced such exertions as the public exigencies required, he deputed General Mifflin to the government of Pennsylvania, and Colonel Reed, his adjutant-general, to the government of New Jersey, with orders to represent the real situation of the army, and the

* This loss was a very serious one, as well from the situation of the province, as because the American squadron, under Commodore Hopkins, was compelled to withdraw as far up the Providence river as it was practicable, and to continue there blocked up and useless for a long time. Two pieces of cannon fell into the hands of the enemy, but they made few prisoners. The conquest of Rhode Island was of great utility for their ulterior operations. From this province they could harass Massachusetts; and the reinforcements that General Lincoln had assembled with the intention of conducting them to the army of Washington, were detained in that province to observe General Clinton, and prevent him from disturbing its tranquillity. Even Connecticut shared the alarm, and retained the reinforcements it was upon the point of sending.

certainty that, without great reinforcements, Philadelphia must fall into the hands of the enemy and the State of Jersey be overrun.

While thus endeavoring to strengthen himself with militia, he pressed Lee to hasten his march, and cautioned him to keep high enough up the country to avoid the enemy, who, having got possession of the mail containing one of his late letters, would certainly endeavor to prevent the junction of the two armies.

This perilous state of things was rendered still more critical by indications of an insurrection in the county of Monmouth, in Jersey, where great numbers favored the royal cause. In other places, too, a hostile temper was displayed, and an indisposition to further resistance began to be manifested throughout that State. These appearances obliged him to make detachments from the militia of his army to overawe the disaffected of Monmouth, who were on the point of assembling in force.

When Washington retreated to Newark, says Gordon, his whole force consisted of not more than 3,500 men. He considered the cause in the greatest danger, and said to Colonel Reed: "Should we retreat to the back parts of Pennsylvania will the Pennsylvanians support us?" The Colonel answered: "If the lower counties are subdued and give up the back counties will do the same." The General passed his hand over his throat and said: "My neck does not feel as though it was made for a halter. We must retire to Augusta county, in Virginia. Numbers will be obliged to repair to us for safety, and we must try what we can do in carrying on a predatory war, and if overpowered we must cross the Alleghany mountains." This indomitable spirit — this immovable constancy of Washington — this determination to hold out till not an inch

of ground should be left to stand upon in the whole continent, strongly reminds us of the determination of the celebrated Prince of Orange, in the same circumstances, "to die in the last ditch."

As the British army crossed the Passaic Washington abandoned his position behind that river, and the day Lord Cornwallis entered Newark he retreated to Brunswick, a small village on the Raritan.

At this place the levies drawn from Maryland and Jersey to compose the flying camp became entitled to their discharge. No remonstrances could detain them, and he sustained the mortification of seeing his feeble army still more enfeebled by being entirely abandoned by these troops in the face of an advancing enemy. The Pennsylvania militia belonging to the flying camp were engaged to serve till the 1st of January. So many of them deserted that it was deemed necessary to place guards on the roads and ferries over the Delaware, to apprehend and send them back to camp. The Governor of New Jersey was again pressed for assistance, but it was not in his power to furnish the aid required. The well-affected part of the lower country was overawed by the British army, and the militia of Morris and Sussex came out slowly and reluctantly.

While at Brunswick attempts were made to retard the advance of the British army by movements indicating an intention to act on the offensive, but this feint was unavailing. Lord Cornwallis continued to press forward, and as his advanced guards showed themselves on the opposite side of the bridge General Washington evacuated the town and marched through Princeton to Trenton. Directions had already been given to collect all the boats on the Delaware from Philadelphia upwards for seventy miles, in the hope that the progress of the enemy might be stopped

at this river, and that in the meantime reinforcements might arrive which would enable him to dispute its passage.

Having with great labor transported the few remaining military stores and baggage over the Delaware Washington determined to remain as long as possible on the northern banks of that river.

The army which was thus pressed slowly through the Jerseys was aided by no other cavalry than a small corps of badly-mounted Connecticut militia, commanded by Major Sheldon, and was almost equally destitute of artillery. Its numbers at no time during the retreat exceeded 4,000 men, and on reaching the Delaware were reduced to less than 3,000, of whom not quite 1,000 were militia of New Jersey. Even among the Continental troops there were many whose term of service was about to expire.

Its defectiveness of numbers did not constitute its only weakness. The regulars were badly armed, worse clad, and almost destitute of tents, blankets, or utensils for dressing their food. They were composed chiefly of the garrison of Fort Lee, and had been obliged to evacuate that place with too much precipitation to bring with them even those few articles of comfort and accommodation with which they had been furnished. Washington found himself at the head of this small band of soldiers, dispirited by their losses and fatigues, retreating almost naked and barefooted, in the cold of November and December (1776), before a numerous, well-appointed, and victorious army, through a desponding country, much more disposed to obtain safety by submission than to seek it by a manly resistance.

In this crisis of American affairs a proclamation was issued by Lord and General Howe, as commissioners appointed on the part of the Crown for restoring peace to America, commanding all persons assembled in arms

against his majesty's government to disband and return to their homes, and all civil officers to desist from their treasonable practices and relinquish their usurped authority. A full pardon was offered to every person who would, within sixty days, appear before certain civil or military officers of the Crown, claim the benefit of that proclamation, and testify his obedience to the laws by subscribing a declaration of his submission to the royal authority. Copies of it were dispersed through the country, after which numbers flocked in daily to make their peace and obtain protection. The contrast between the splendid appearance of the pursuing army, and that of the ragged Americans who were flying before them, could not fail to nourish the general opinion that the contest was approaching its termination.

Among the many valuable traits in the character of Washington was that unyielding firmness of mind which resisted these accumulated circumstances of depression, and supported him under them. Undismayed by the dangers which surrounded him he did not for an instant relax his exertions, nor omit any thing which could obstruct the progress of the enemy or improve his own condition. He did not appear to despair of the public safety, but struggled against adverse fortune with the hope of yet vanquishing the difficulties which surrounded him, and constantly showed himself to his harassed and enfeebled army, with a serene, unembarrassed countenance, betraying no fears in himself and invigorating and inspiring with confidence the bosoms of others. To this unconquerable firmness, to this perfect self-possession under the most desperate circumstances, is America, in a great degree, indebted for her independence.*

* Marshall, "Life of Washington."

After removing his baggage and stores over the Delaware, and sending his sick to Philadelphia (December 6, 1776), Washington, finding that Lord Cornwallis still continued in Brunswick, detached 1,200 men to Princeton, in the hope that this appearance of advancing on the British might not only retard their progress, but cover a part of the country and reanimate the people of Jersey.

Some portion of this short respite from laborious service was devoted to the predominant wish of his heart — preparations for the next campaign — by impressing on Congress a conviction of the real causes of the present calamitous state of things. The abandonment of the army by whole regiments of the flying camp, in the face of an advancing and superior enemy, and the impracticability of calling out the militia of Jersey and Pennsylvania in sufficient force to prevent Lord Cornwallis from overrunning the first State, or restrain him from entering the last, had it not been saved by other causes, were practical lessons on the subjects of enlistments for a short time, and a reliance on militia, which no prejudice could disregard, and which could not fail to add great weight to the remonstrances formerly made to Congress by Washington, which were now repeated.

The exertions of General Mifflin to raise the militia of Pennsylvania, though unavailing in the country, were successful in Philadelphia. A large proportion of the inhabitants of that city capable of bearing arms had associated for the general defense; and on this occasion 1,500 of them marched to Trenton, to which place a German battalion was also ordered by Congress. On the arrival of these troops Washington commenced his march to Princeton, but was stopped by the intelligence that Lord Cornwallis, having received large reinforcements, was advancing rap-

idly from Brunswick by different routes and endeavoring to gain his rear.

On receiving this intelligence he crossed the Delaware and posted his army in such a manner as to guard the fords. As his rear passed the river the van of the British army appeared in sight. The main body took post at Trenton, and detachments were placed both above and below, while small parties, without interruption from the people of the country, reconnoitered the Delaware for a considerable distance. From Bordentown, below Trenton, the course of the river turns westward and forms an acute angle with its course from Philadelphia to that place; so that Lord Cornwallis might cross a considerable distance above, and be not much, if any, further from that city than the American army.

The British general made some unsuccessful attempts to seize a number of boats guarded by Lord Stirling about Coryell's Ferry,* and in order to facilitate his movements

* Cornwallis was generally rapid enough in his movements when acting on his own responsibility; but on this occasion the slow and cautious habits of his superior, General Howe, seem to have infected him. He should have overtaken Washington before he reached the Delaware. At this time, if we may believe Gordon, a very slight circumstance saved the American army. He says that Lord Cornwallis, who halted with the rear division within six miles of Trenton, intended sending over a body of men very early the next morning, near two miles below Coryell's Ferry, and got the troops in readiness and the artillery prepared to cover the landing; for in that place it was only four-and-twenty rods to a spit of sand on the Pennsylvania side, on which a sufficient number were to have landed, and then to have marched up to Coryell's Ferry, and to have taken the boats that had been collected there by the Americans and left under a guard of only ten men; with them it was meant to carry over the main body. In the vicinity of this place a large sunken Durham boat (which came down three days before, laden with flour, and which could

down the river, on the Jersey shore, repaired the bridges below Trenton, which had been broken down by order of Washington. He then advanced a strong detachment to Bordentown, giving indications of an intention to cross the Delaware at the same time above and below, and either to march in two columns to Philadelphia or completely to envelop the American army in the angle of the river. To counteract this plan Washington stationed a few galleys to watch the movements of his enemy below and aid in repelling any effort to pass over to the Pennsylvania shore, and made such a disposition of his little army as to guard against any attempt to force a passage above, which he believed to be the real design.

Having made his arrangements he waited anxiously for reinforcements, and in the meantime sent daily parties over

carry one hundred men), lay concealed under a bank. This had been discovered and taken away by Mr. Mersereau, so that the British were disappointed in their expectation of finding it. They hailed one Thomson, a Quaker, who lived on the other side of the Delaware, and inquired what was become of the boat, and were answered it was carried off. They continued reconnoitering up and down the river until 10 o'clock, but finding no boats, returned to Pennytown (Pennington). Men had been employed in time for taking off all the boats from the Jersey side of the Delaware, but Mr. Mersereau's attention would not admit of his confiding wholly in their care and prudence. He therefore went up the river to examine whether all the boats were really carried off or destroyed; upon discovering the above-mentioned sunken one, which had escaped the observation of the men, and inquiring of a person in the neighborhood concerning her, he was told that she was an old one and good for nothing, but, not relying upon the information, he found her to be new, had the water bailed out, and sent her off. The importance of this affair to the Americans prevents the relation of it from being trifling. Had Lord Cornwallis crossed into Pennsylvania as he proposed, the consequence would probably have been fatal to the Americans.

the river to harass the enemy and to observe his situation.

The utmost exertions were made by government to raise the militia. In the hope that a respectable body of Continental troops would aid these exertions Washington had directed Gates, with the regulars of the northern army, and Heath, with those at Peekskill, to march to his assistance.

Although General Lee had been repeatedly urged to join the Commander-in-Chief he proceeded slowly in the execution of these orders, manifesting a strong disposition to retain his separate command, and rather to hang on and threaten the rear of the British army than to strengthen that in its front.* With this view he proposed establishing himself at Morristown. On receiving a letter from Washington disapproving this proposition, and urging him to hasten his march, Lee still avowed a preference for his own plan and proceeded reluctantly toward the Delaware. While passing through Morris county, at the distance of twenty miles from the British encampment, he, very incautiously, quartered under a slight guard in a house about three miles from his army. Information of this circumstance was given by a countryman to Colonel Harcourt, at that time detached with a body of cavalry to watch his movements, who immediately formed and executed the design of seizing him. Early in the morning of the 12th of December (1776) this officer reached Lee's quarters, who received no intimation of his danger until the house was surrounded and he found himself a prisoner. He was carried off in triumph to the British army where he was, for some time, treated as a deserter from the British service.

* Lee's real object was to have the credit of driving the British out of "the Jerseys;" and to contrast this success with Washington's retreat, for "ulterior purposes."

This misfortune made a serious impression on all America. The confidence originally placed in General Lee had been increased by his success in the southern department, and by a belief that his opinions, during the military operations in New York, had contributed to the adoption of those judicious movements which had, in some measure, defeated the plans of General Howe in that quarter. It was also believed that he had dissented from the resolution of the council of war for maintaining Forts Washington and Lee. No officer, except the Commander-in-Chief, possessed at that time in so eminent a degree the confidence of the army or of the country, and his loss was almost universally bewailed as one of the greatest calamities which had befallen the American arms. It was regretted by no person more than by Washington himself. He respected the merit of that eccentric veteran and sincerely lamented his captivity. The British were greatly elated at Lee's capture, esteeming it equal to a victory, and declaring that they taken the palladium of America.

General Sullivan who, on the 4th of September, had been exchanged for General Prescott, and on whom the command of that division devolved after the capture of Lee, promptly obeyed the orders which had been directed to that officer, and crossing the Delaware at Philipsburg joined the Commander-in-Chief. On the same day General Gates arrived with a few northern troops. By these and other reinforcements the army was augmented to about 7,000 effective men.

Congress on the 12th of December, the same day that Lee was captured, removed its sittings to Baltimore, where they waited anxiously but firmly the progress of affairs.

The attempts of the British general to get possession of boats for the transportation of his army over the Dela-

ware having failed, he gave indications of an intention to close the campaign and to retire into winter quarters. About 4,000 men were cantoned on the Delaware at Trenton, Bordentown, the White Horse, and Mount Holly, and the remaining part of the army of Jersey was distributed from that river to the Hackensack. Strong corps were posted at Princeton, Brunswick, and Elizabethtown.

To intimidate the people and thereby impede the recruiting service was believed to be no inconsiderable inducement with General Howe for covering so large a portion of Jersey. To counteract these views Washington ordered three of the regiments from Peekskill to halt at Morristown, and to unite with about 800 militia assembled at that place under Colonel Ford. General Maxwell was sent to take command of these troops, with orders to watch the motions of the enemy, to harass him in his marches, to give intelligence of all his movements, to keep up the spirits of the militia, and to prevent the inhabitants from going within the British lines and taking protection.

The short interval between this cantonment of the British troops and the recommencement of active operations was employed by Washington in repeating the representations he had so often made to Congress respecting preparations for the ensuing campaign.

General Howe, as an English writer remarks, has been severely censured for not pressing the pursuit of the Americans with more activity and overwhelming Washington before he found refuge behind the Delaware. Probably however the censure is not quite just, although it may be regarded as certain that the delay of the British force proved the salvation of the American army. Howe's conduct was marked by cool prudence rather than by daring enterprise or unwary impetuosity. He was on the

whole as successful as any other British general during the war, and he exposed himself to none of those disasters which fell upon others of his compeers.

But, however this may be, it is undoubtedly true that Washington gave evidence of superior generalship in this retreat through the Jerseys, and not only superior qualities as a Commander-in-Chief, but also of possessing the higher and nobler endowments of the most exalted patriotism. Painful, indeed, is it to see what trials and perplexities and humiliations waited upon his every step, and how his soul was racked with the cares and burdens laid upon him. But trials are not sent without design. Washington was formed of that material which is purified and strengthened by trial. Bravely did he endure, profoundly learned and wise did he become by endurance, and no man of his day ever attained such vast influence as he did by the irrefragable proofs which he exhibited of the purity, integrity, and decision of his character and conduct.*

* Spencer, "History of the United States."

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Schroeder, John Frederick,
1800-1857.

Life and times of Washington

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